SPECIAL SPOOKY ISSUE!

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DECEMBER 1989



GHOSTBUSTERS II

SPOOK FEATURES: GHOULS & GHOSTS/ SPOOKED MAPS/ SPHERICAL

FREE BADGE!

BLUEPRINT: TEST DRIVE II

MEGATAPE 23

IF NO MEGATAPE 8 IS ATTACHED HERE TELL YOUR NEWSAGENT IMMEDIATELY!

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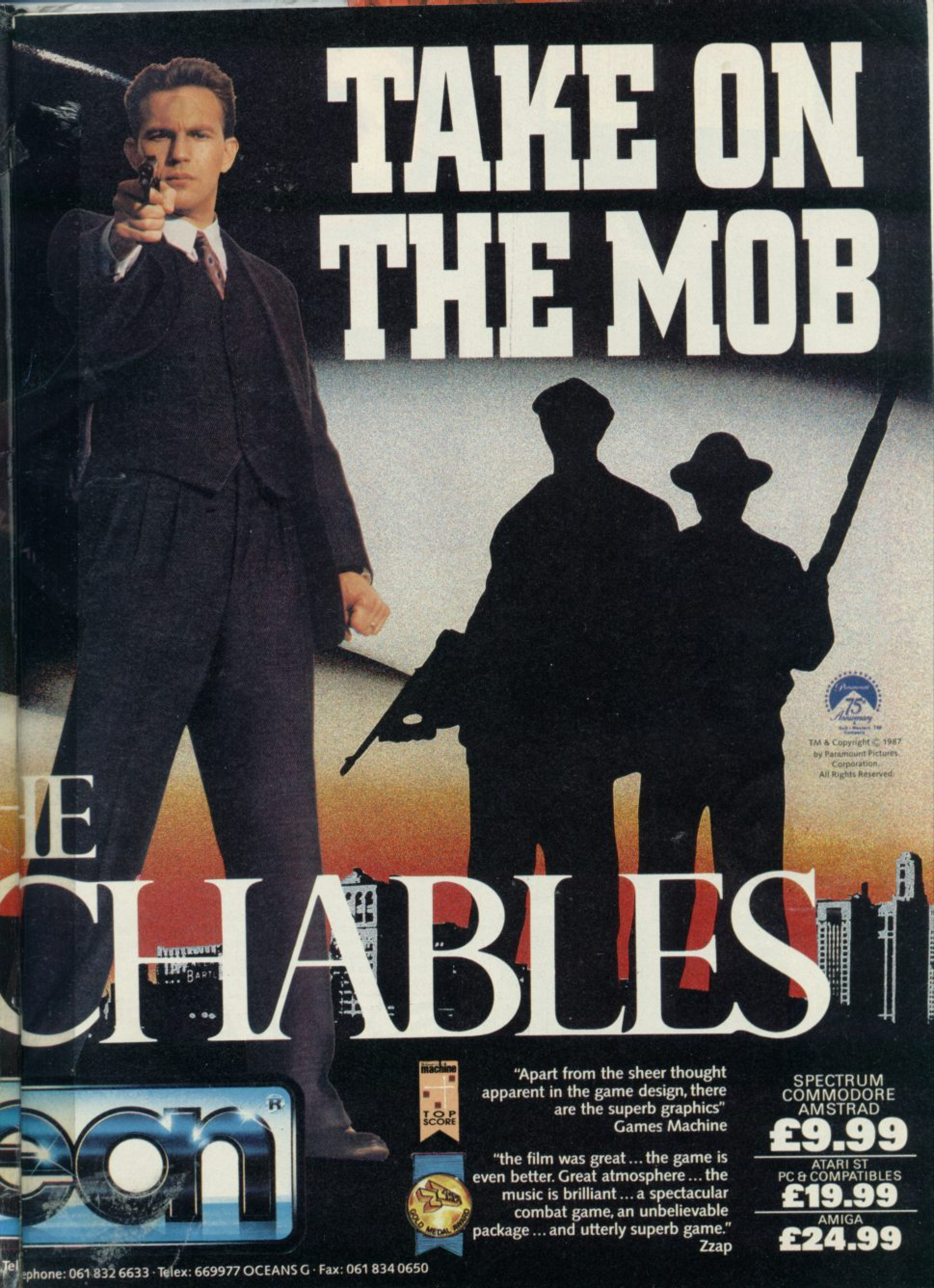
INSIDE: TOOBIN PICTIONARY PURPLE SATURN DAY MYTH XMAS COIN-OPS!

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CONT

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JIM "Scaredy Cat" DOUGLAS

With Ghostbuster fever in the office most of the SU team are making ghostly woo wooing noises and filling our mouths with blood capsules. Spazzy Jim, however, is turning into a human jelly (and you all thought he was really hard didn't you?) This is him just before he hid under the desk shouting, "stop it you lot, you know I don't like the dark"



ALISON "Heads Up!" SKEAT

Entering in Ghostbustee fever like a good 'un, Al actually agreed to have her head sawn off (she'll do anything for a laugh, that one - Jim) for our photographer. We are at the mo putting her back together with Pritt stick and staples - is there a paramedic in the house?



TIM "Creeping Terror" NOONAN

After 15 pints of shandy at his local The Kosh and Headbutt, and 32 pints of curry from his fave "restaurant" Tim finds he has a bad case of biryana botty and terrifies the rest of the SU team with his impression of a Halloween pumpkin head



GARTH "Nosferatu" SUMPTER

A right ruddy spooky weirdo this one. Garthy runs around EMAP towers, fangs at the ready, biting the office cat and wiping the blood on the roller towel in the loo (geross - all SU readers). That's on any normal day at work, but since Ghostbuster fever he's gone completely off his nut and killed everyone.... (but not really)



ADVENTURE The Sorceress HOW THE HELL Andrew Hewson I'VE GOT THIS PROBLEM Rupert Goodwins ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER James Owens SENIOR SALES Martha Moloughney AD PRODUCTION Emma "Cor Blimey!" Ward MARKETING MANAGER Dean "Beezer Geezer" Barrett MARKETING ASSISTANT Sarah Ewing PUBLISHER Terry "Digestable" Pratt OUR ADDRESS: Sinclair User, Priory Ct, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. OUR PHONE NUMBER: 01-251 6222 OUR FAX NO: 01-490 1095 THIS MONTH'S COVER: Ghostbusters II from Activision

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WAYNE'S 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS 60

Smeggy Smedders tells you what he got up to in his chrimbo hols - that's if you're bothered anyway - we know we're not in the least bit



POSTER 62

If you read any other mag than lovely cuddly SU you wouldn't get this month's radical poster would you... and then you'd be really Myth'ed - geddit?



DIRTY TRICKS DEPT. 14

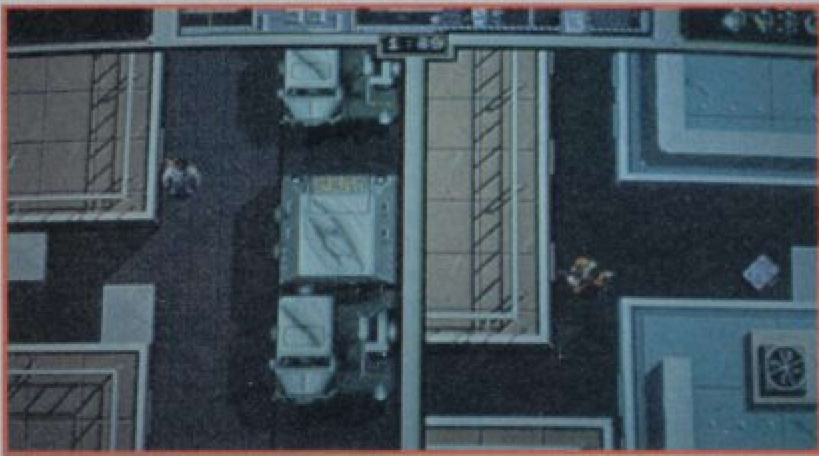
"I never knew there was so much in it". That's what you'll be saying about Dirty Tricks this month. Not only have we got a Batman map and a Spooked map, we've got tips for Robocop and Ghouls and Ghosts and squidged in next to that lot is a pig full of pokes - you lucky bleeders.

SOFTWARE

TENTS

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEWS 106

We've got the hottest pooper scooper of a lowdown on *CRACKDOWN* from US GOLD! Not seen yet by anyone except our tame madman Garth, we blow the gaff! Plus, check out the PREviews that we have as REviews - STUNT CAR DRIVER, MYTH and OPERATION THUNDERBOLT. Actually finished games - not screenshots!



WIN WIN WIN! A CINEMA FULL OF TICKETS 50

Here's your chance to go to the cinema lots of times. We're giving away 20 cinema tickets to one lucky blighter - and that could be you. Go in for our Ghostbusters II compo now and get very square eyes indeed.

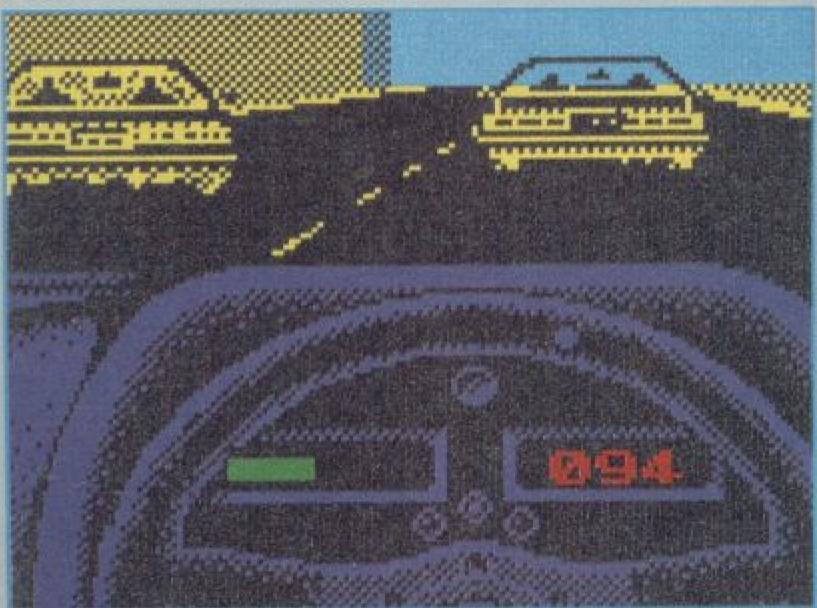


COVER GAME 10

It's great, it's fun, it's spooky, it's skill, it's from Activision, it's action-packed, it's on page 26... it's Ghostbusters II hurrah!!

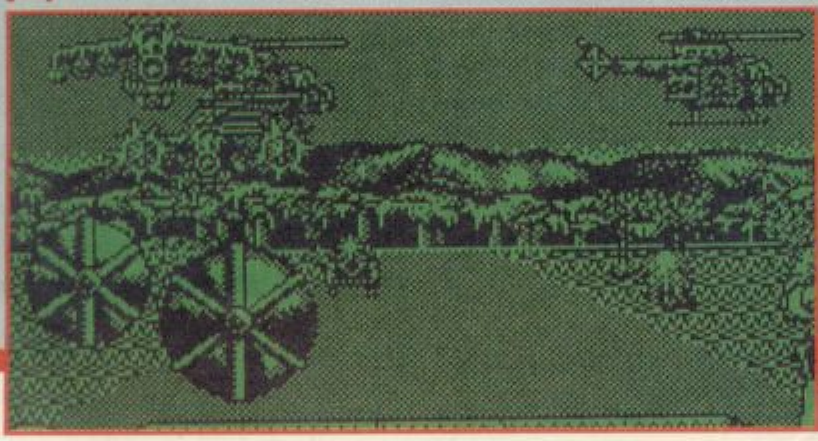
BLUEPRINT 68 and 74

Not one, but two stonking great Blueprints for you this month chums. We give you the low down on Test Drive II and all its ins and outs. Then we come to X-Out, you get the low down and in and outy bits on that one too - gosh!!!



MEGATAPE 6

A thoroughly beezer event this month. We've got you an entirely gobsmacking playable demo of the sequel to Operation Wolf, Operation Thunderbolt. You can sample for yourself the delights of the game most people are predicting will be this year's number one game. There's also an entirely complete and fully lovevly adventure called The Lost City which will have you round the twist with frustration in a jiffy.



Wooo oooo!

Welcome to our special Spooky issue, fright fiends! This month we've gone overboard on the ghoulies (arf) and stocked up our pages with a host of ghosts. There are reviews of Ghostbusters II, Spooked and Myth, and a wopper spooky Myth poster in the middle.

REGULARS

MEGA

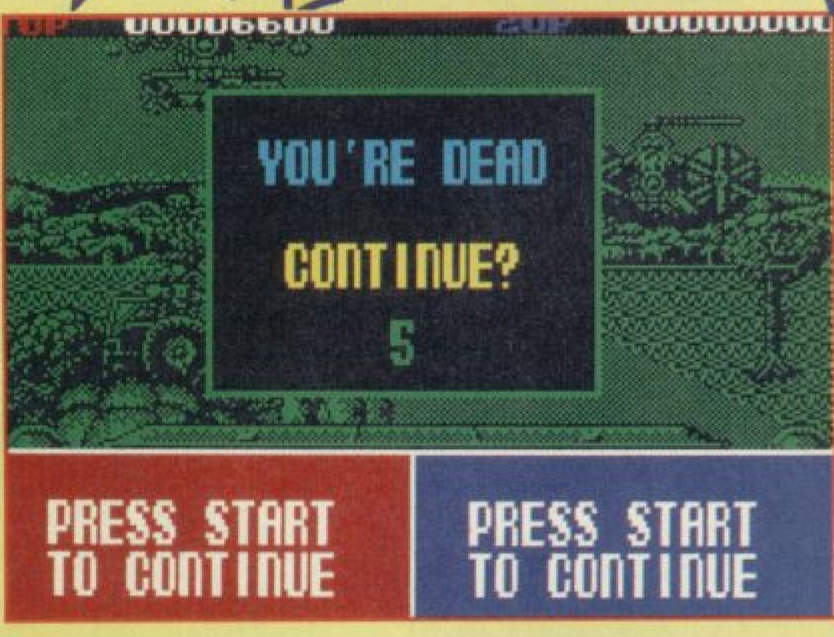
WELCOME TO MEGATAPE 23!

Deck the halls with things and holly, etc. It's the season to thank your lucky stars that you remembered to pick up this month's issue. Not only have we got an entire level of the fantastic Operation Thunderbolt from Ocean, but there's also a completely complete and original GRAPHIC adventure

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

This time last year there was a game on the market which a few of you thought was awright and it made a few pennies for a minor software house. That game was Operation Wolf and it just about slipped into the SU charts because you all felt sorry for it.

Oh alright then, you ruddy well loved it to bits and spent all of your pocket money on it, and your eyes went all square and I'm a complete liar. Now, just when you thought that maybe you'd tired of Op Wolf those naughty pups at Ocean go and bring out the sequel called Operation Thunderbolt, and you get all jittery and can't wait to pull on your gear and shoot everything in sight.



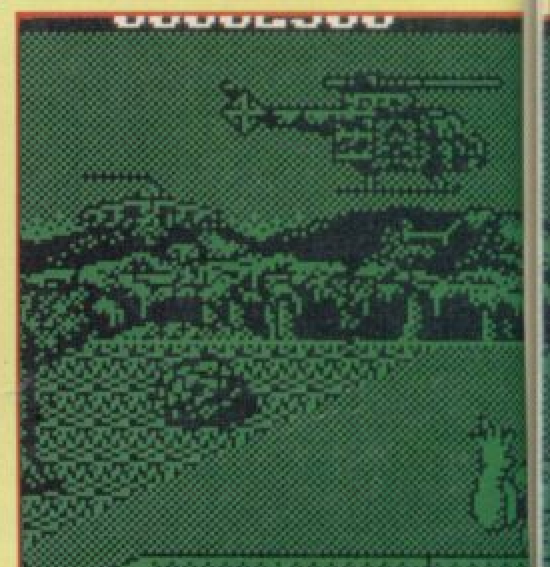
We guess you'll all be pestering the ol' crumblies to get you Op Thunderbolt for chrimbo, so to give you a wee tastette we've nicked a level of it and stuffed it onto the A side (no less) of Megatape 23 for your delectation.

It kinda runs along the same lines as Op Wolf but plenty times better because this time it's a two player bonanza. On our tape you have to shoot all the araby chappies that are dim enough to get in your way, and there's also a chock load of helicopters for you to blast at too.



Along the way, you have to pick up Pepsi bottles to give you more energy and there are extra ammunition clips to collect too. If you're in a bit a of a sticky situation you can always fling a bomb or two (not many of those, unfortunately) in the nasties direction to wipe the lot of 'em out - all great stuff eh? We love it to death and we're sure you will too, load it up before it's too late.

Follow the on screen instructions to find out how to control everything. In case everything gets too much for you, remember to look out for the little dot which indicated where your sight is. There's no time to waste shooting the palm trees when there's enemy soldiers to ice.



THE LOST CITY

Well this is a new one eh folks? The B side of this month's Megatape has an extra special game called The Lost City which is a wonderful adven-

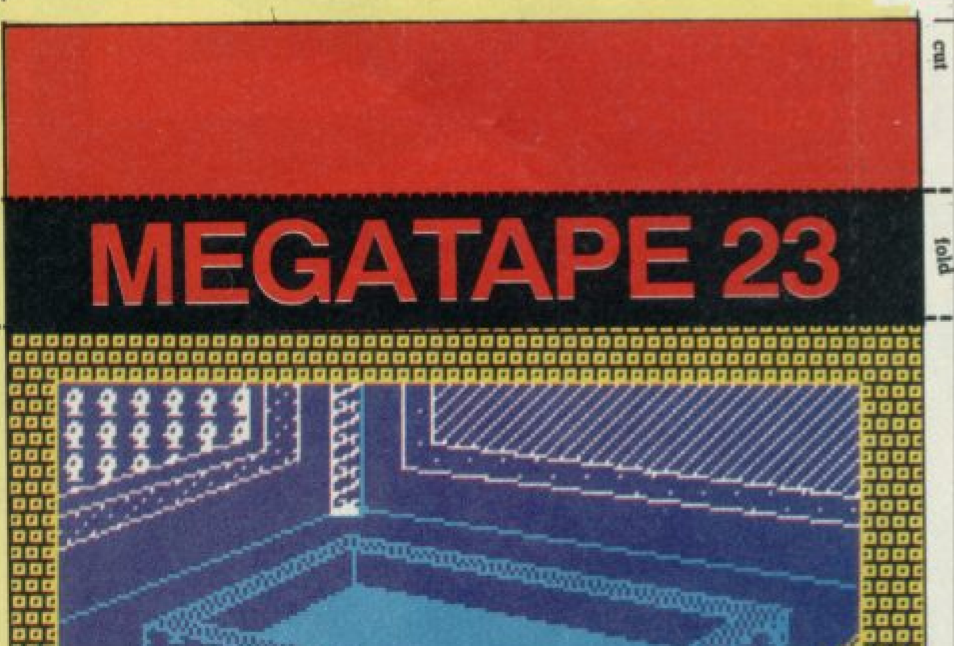




turey type wheeze put together exclusively for SU and nobody else, so naaaar.
Not only is it available just to lovely SU readers it's has the fab addition of graphics too. Brilliant eh, words AND pictures, who could ask for anything more?
In the Lost City you are on a cruise liner enjoying your hols, and you have fallen asleep whilst sitting out in the sun. This is where all the action starts because you waft off into a dream and find yourself in the underwater city of Atlantis (gasp - the whole SU team).
The idea of the game is for you to troll around the city answering various questions so that you can make your way back to dry land and happiness.
The Lost City was put together by Martin Page, he being the laddo behind Portals of Pthaal, so it can be bad. It all looks like a jolly old jape to me, so why not try it out - mega fun if ever there was!

WAAAAAH! MY MEGATAPE'S BROKEN

Should your Megatape 23 not load (God forbid), fall apart or explode into a thousand pieces this is what you should do.
Send it to the following people with your name and address and they will replace your busted tape as soon as poss - Megatape Returns Interceptor Duplication Unit 7 Mercury House Calleva Park Aldermaston Berkshire



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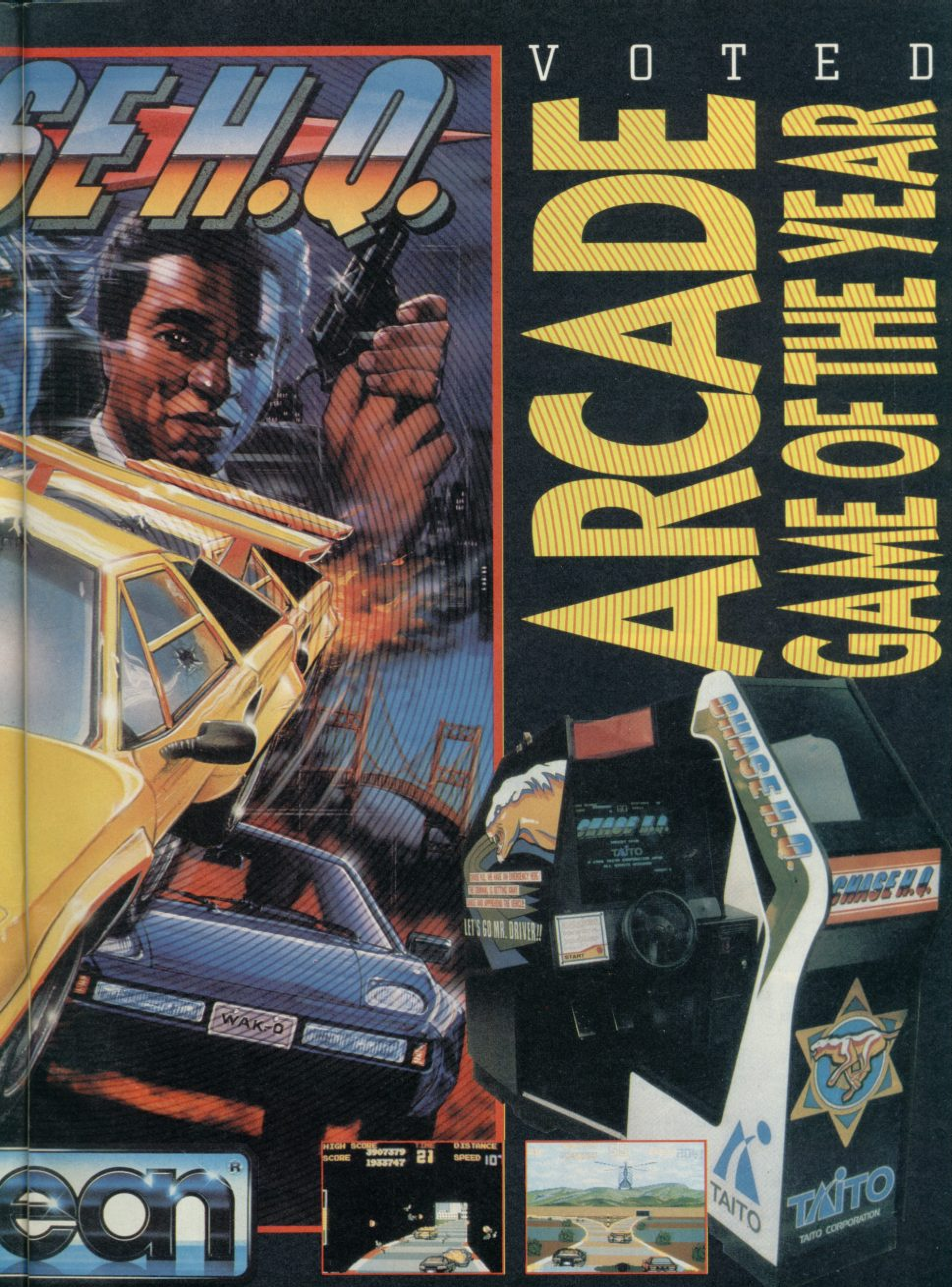


BARRELLING THROUGH THE CITY STREETS,

along the roughest of dirt tracks and through busy tunnels – if you can hold the line! The low life can run, but they can't hide... **CHASE H.Q.**

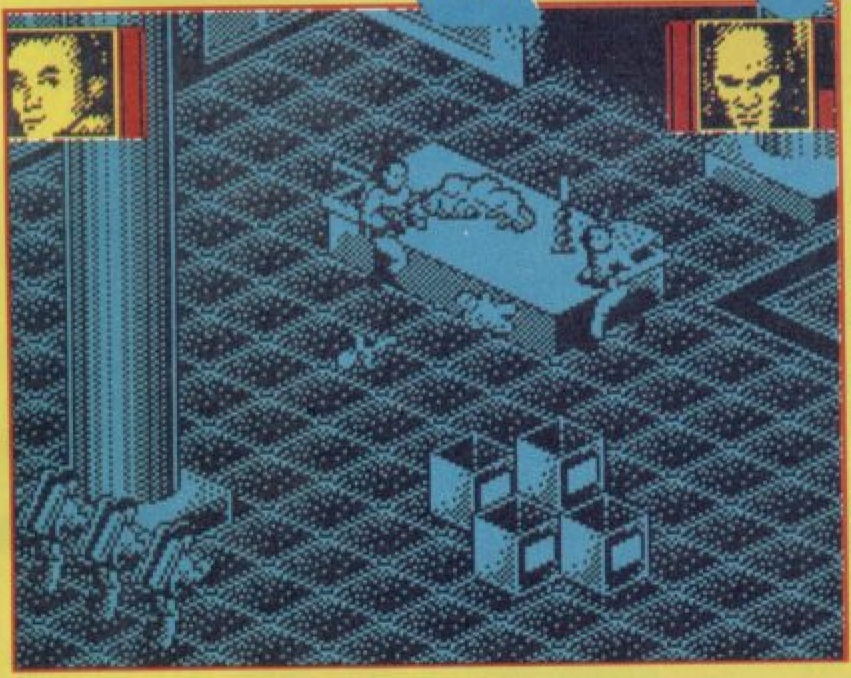
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VOTED
ARCADE
GAME OF THE YEAR
WAK-O
LET'S GO MR. DRIVER!!
START
CHASE H.Q.
HIGH SCORE 3907379
SCORE 1953747
TIME 21
DISTANCE
SPEED 10
TAITO
TAITO
TAITO CORPORATION

GHOSTBU





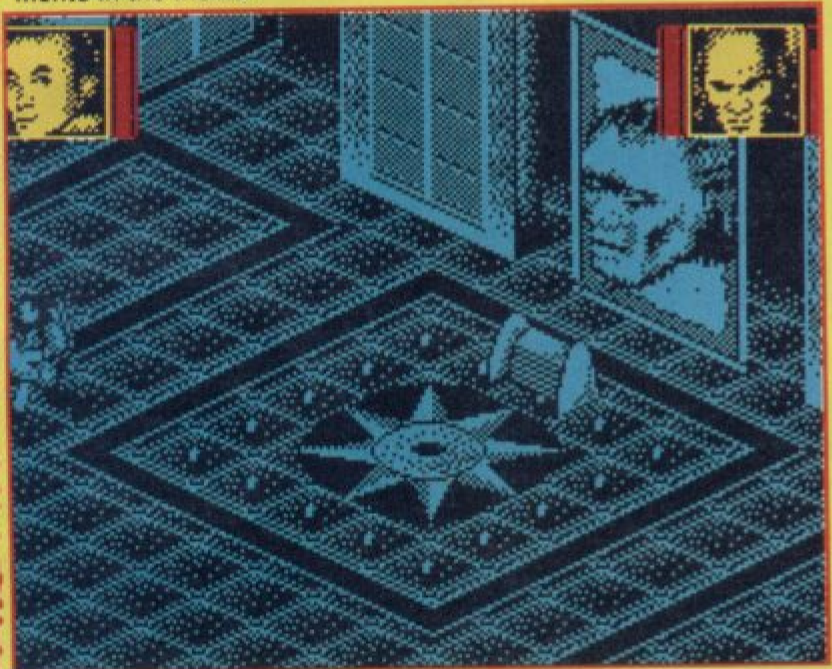


They're coming to save the world - for a second time! After a number of years scraping a living from appearing on TV re-living their spook-ridding escapades and unsuccessfully entertaining at children's parties, the Ghostbusters are about to don their funny jumpsuits and get slimey once again.

Since the end of the last movie, things have moved on quite a way. Sigourney Weaver has dropped a suspicious sprog and the Ghostbusters have had their 'busting licence revoked after virtually trashing New York the last time the spooks came around.

With the film due for release in the first week of December, Activision have picked the prime time to release; just in time to catch the media whirl surrounding the movie.

The main three sections of the game are, of course, translations of the memorable moments in the movie.



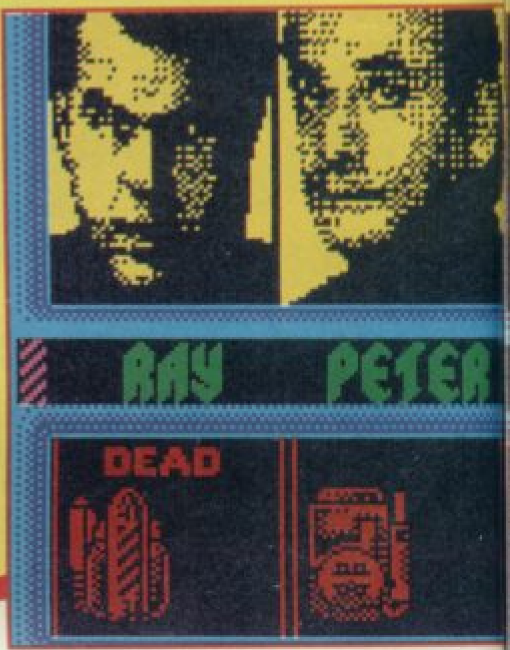
We join the action after Sigourney's kid has been mysteriously whooshed all over the town and pursued by slime. The Busters have reformed and trying to track down the scumbag spectors.

Their investigations and Spook-o-meter lead them into the middle of a busy road. Below, they discover an ancient sewer network. Having dug a hole big enough to fit through, you must lower Peter down the hole in order to get proof of Ghostly goings on and therefore recover the licence to bust.

On your way down, you've got to zap as many fiends as possible. You've got to ensure that Peter doesn't come a cropper through any of the



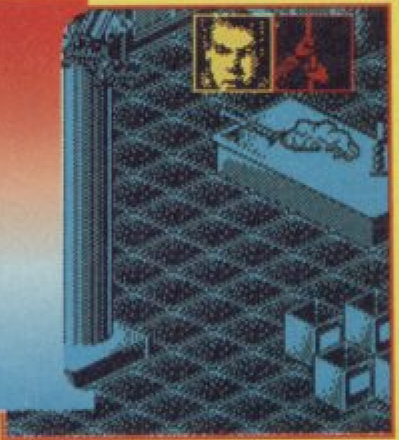


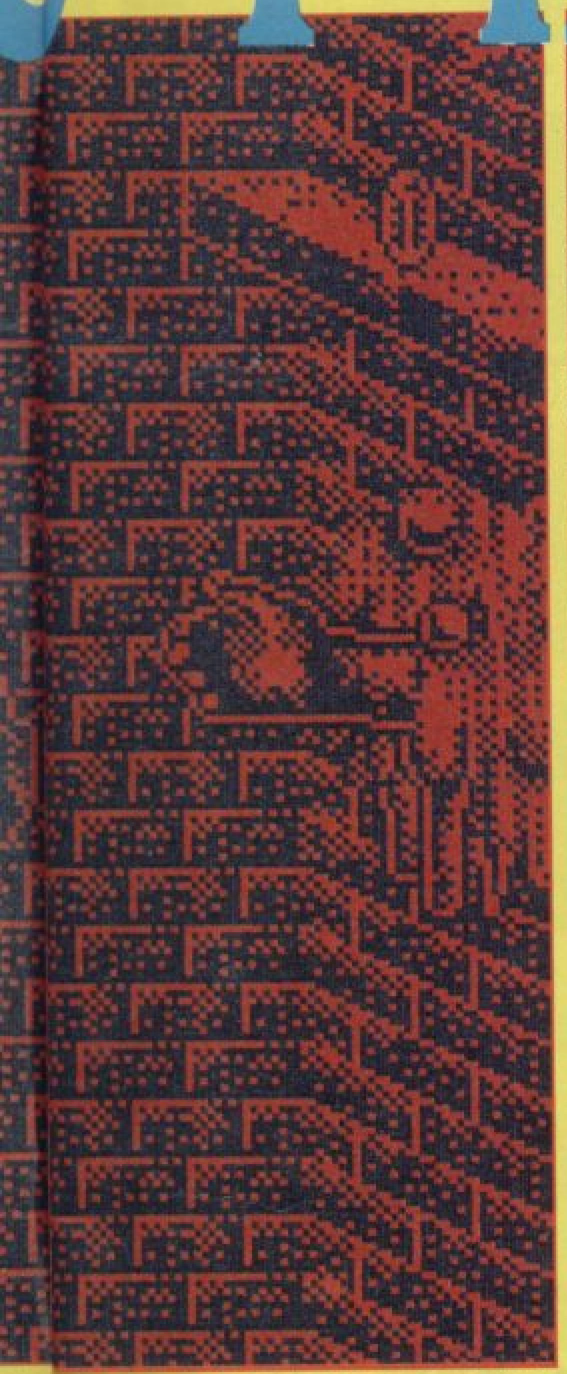


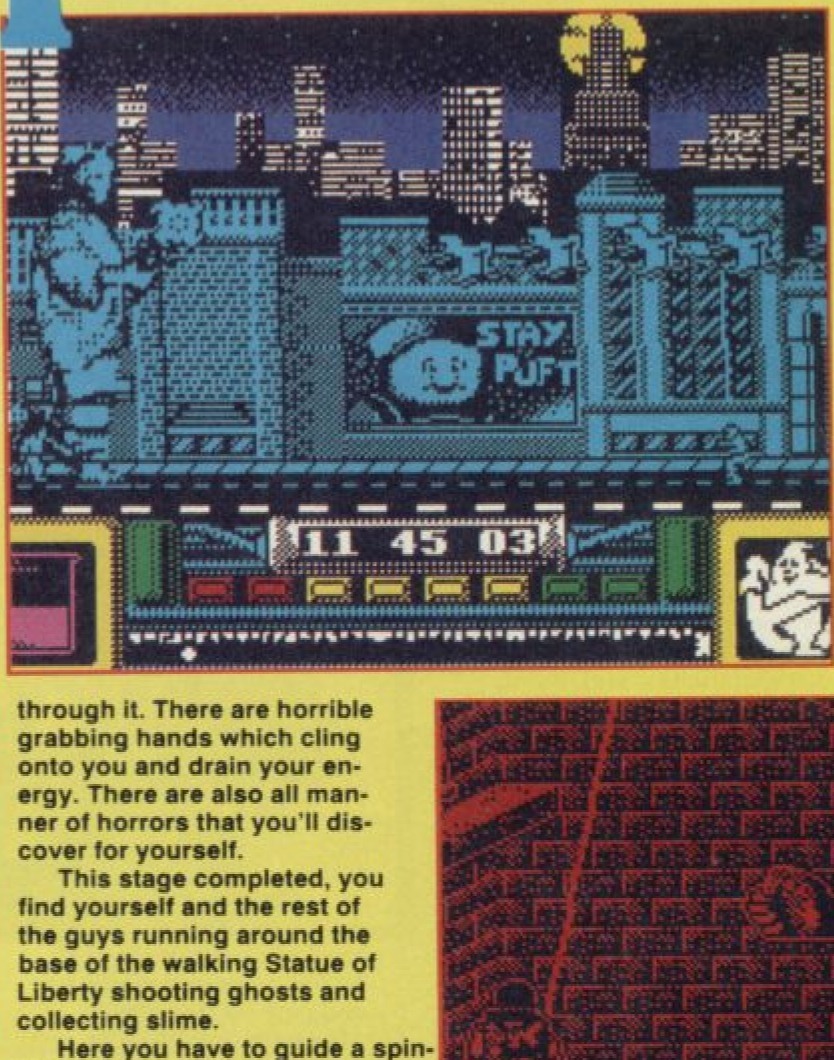
nasty tricks and traps awaiting him.

There are horrible slicing ghosts that attach themselves to the rope and knaw









storing a rather horrible painting of Mr Evil.

First you have to slide down the poles into the gallery. This is a tricky event for a start. The Ghostbusters seem to have got extremely fragile all of a sudden, and can be killed stone or at the very least stunned if you don't put them on the ground in the most gentle manner possible.

The bad guys are draining the lifeblood from - yes it's that kid again - Once safely on the floor, you must grab Sigourney's sprog from the clutches of the evil forces.

Once you've plucked him from the altar of doom, it's important that he doesn't get snatched back. You've got to kill the baddie with your special beam. (Fnar) After this, Mr Big himself will step out of the painting and attack you in a frenzy. Oooer!

Using the two characters carrying the beam lasers (quite a tricky maneouvre) you've got to get him cornered and zap until he melts away.

through it. There are horrible grabbing hands which cling onto you and drain your energy. There are also all manner of horrors that you'll discover for yourself.

This stage completed, you find yourself and the rest of the guys running around the base of the walking Statue of Liberty shooting ghosts and collecting slime.

Here you have to guide a spinning fireball around the screen and shoot down an ever-increasing army of evil spooks. Once plugged, each spook drops a globule of slime.

(Important movie info:- in the film the guys animate the Statue of Liberty with a load of dancing slime - honest - York)

The final section of the game takes place in the art gallery where Sigourney has been re-







ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

Movie blockbuster makes a pretty good transition to small screen.

GRAPHICS	SOUND
65	
70	69
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

Label: Activision Author: The Oliver Twins Price: £8.95 Memory: 48K/128K Joystick: Various

Reviewer

OVERALL 70

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

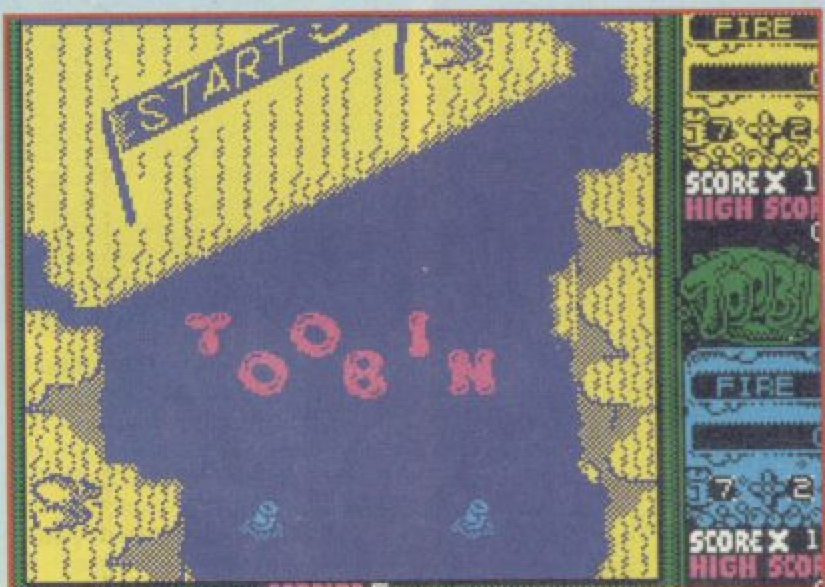
GAMES REVIEW!

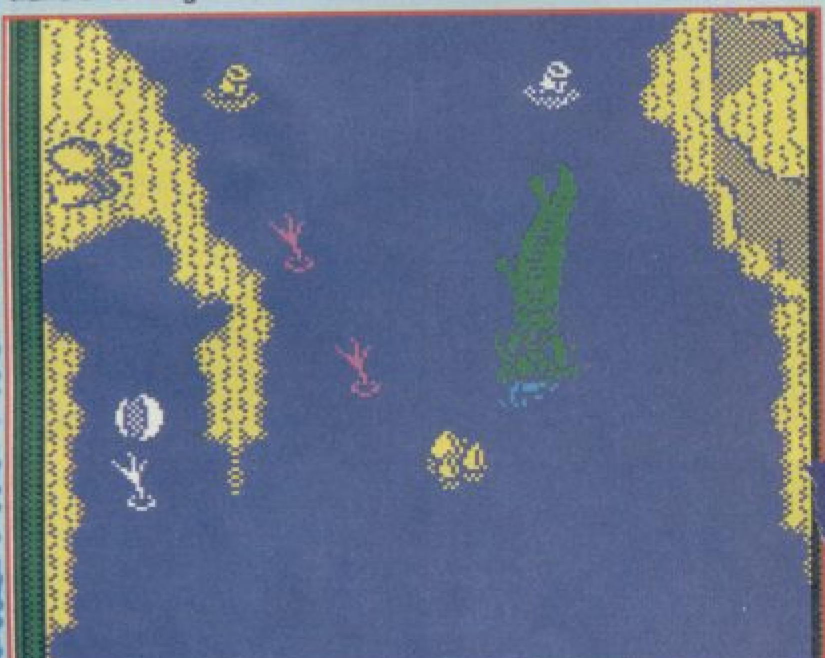
TOOBIN



Toobin' - the first game of it's kind," so they say. Come on boys! What the hell is that supposed to mean? First ever vertical scroller on the Spectrum? I think not. First ever arcade conversion? Ummmmm, nope. How about, "First ever vertically scrolling arcade conversion based on cool dudes in loud shirts paddling large inner tubes down rivers and having to avoid stuff and pick up cans and then throw them at other things on the banks of different rivers which are shooting at you. Given that definition, I can assure you that Toobin' certainly is a Galactic first.

Toobin' was, of course, in the first instance a coin-op by those nice cuddly people at Atari Games which, although generally regarded as a good laff, did not have the punters queuing in the streets to have a go. So what's it like when transferred to glorious 48K?





Not a disaster by any means, but you'd certainly want to have been a fan of the original to make this an essential purchase.

The coin-op was a typical Atari Games MOR job, which quirky graphics and an odd control system - like A.P.B. for example. It's scenario is Californian to the extreme, which you (or you plus a mate), wearing mirror shades plus shirts loud enough to get you arrested after 10pm, putting your botty in an inner tube and paddling away like mad.

The game is simple enough, in that you avoid obstacles in the river (trees that fall from the bank and drift across, rocks, branches, etc), trying not to get shot by assorted baddies on the banks, characteristic of the level you are currently playing. So during the first bit of the Colarado river you watch out for fishermen lobbing floats at you, while later on trucking down the Styx there are Red Devils that try to puncture your tube with flying forks.

When your tube is punctured, you loose a life. You can also be molested by a big crocodile that comes down from the top of the screen when it decides you aren't going fast enough - although it seems a bit on the eager side...maybe it hasn't been fed lately.

To get extra points you can try and pick up treasure chests (extra points), cola cans (your only weapon to lob at obstacles and baddies) - with a six-pack giving you unlimited cans until you loose that particular life. Also, you can try to guide your toob between gates in the river (like in canoeing) to get big wobbly extra points - manage to do it without touching either side of the gate and you get the full bananas, bump into them and the points awarded go down.

What this amounts to, after a while, is a rather repetitive exercise in joystick waggling and/or button pushing. The coin-op relied on some fab graphics in the different sections and hoopy sound effects to keep the interest of the punters up - but even then they didn't come back for very much more.

When you put *Toobin'* on the Speccy, the flaws in the original game are exposed - and even if the implementation was perfect (it isn't) - *Toobin'* would still not be a great game. What we're left with is an average conversion of a not so average coin-op. Which if you were pumped up about *Toobin'* in the first place is fine - but will seem a bit flat to the rest of us, otherwise.

FAX BOX

ARCADE REVIEW

Average coin-op converted to make an average game

Label: Tengen Author: In-house Price: £8.95 Memory: 48K/128K Joystick: Various

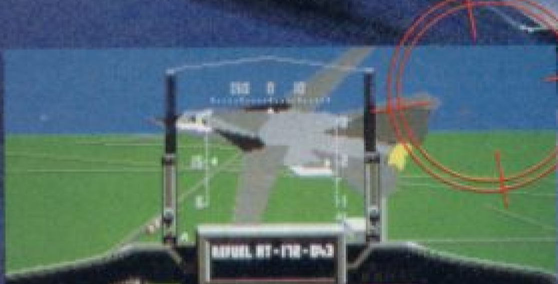
Reviewer: Jim Douglas

GRAPHICS	SOUND	LAST ABILITY	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL
67	69	59	61	63

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

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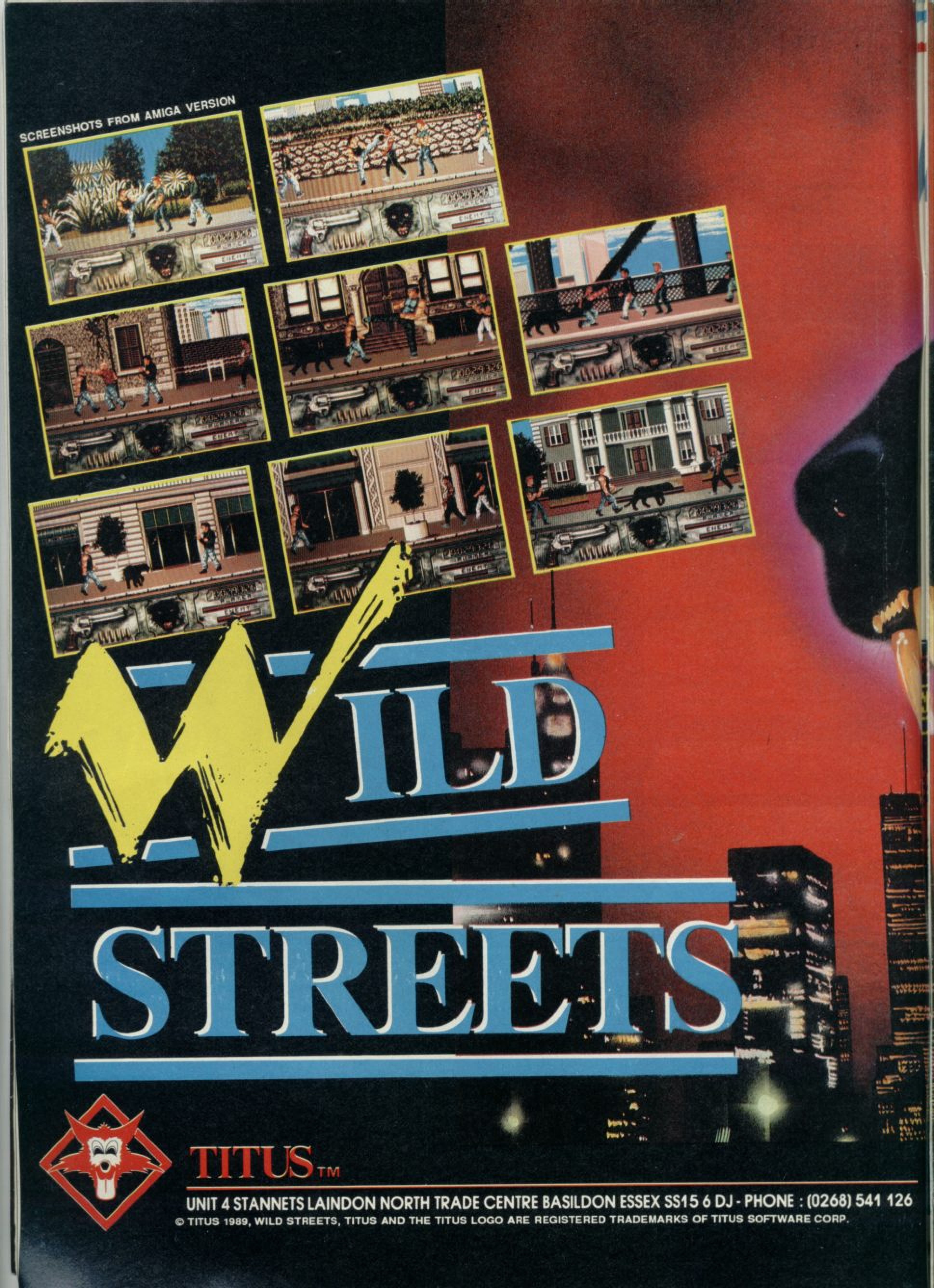
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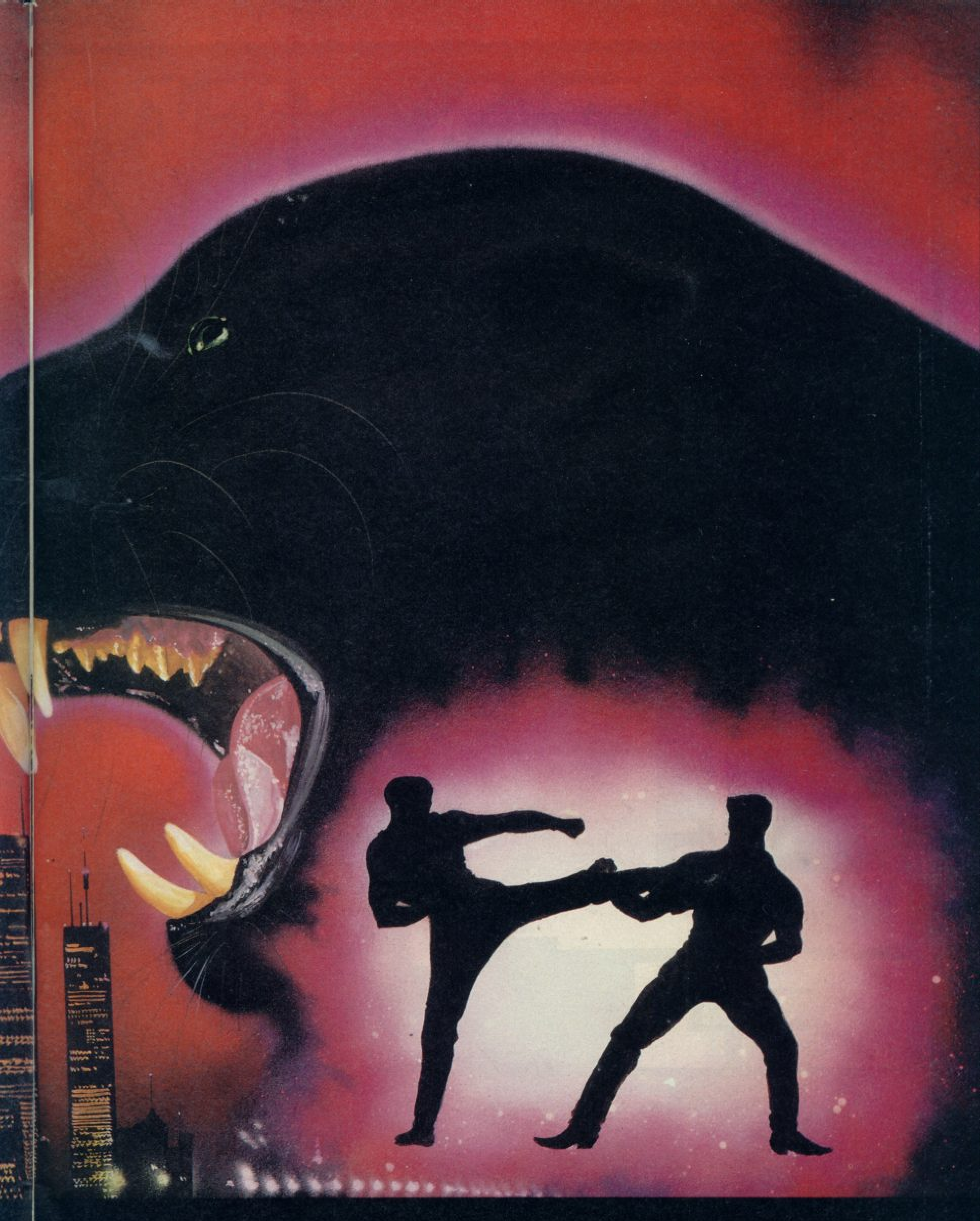
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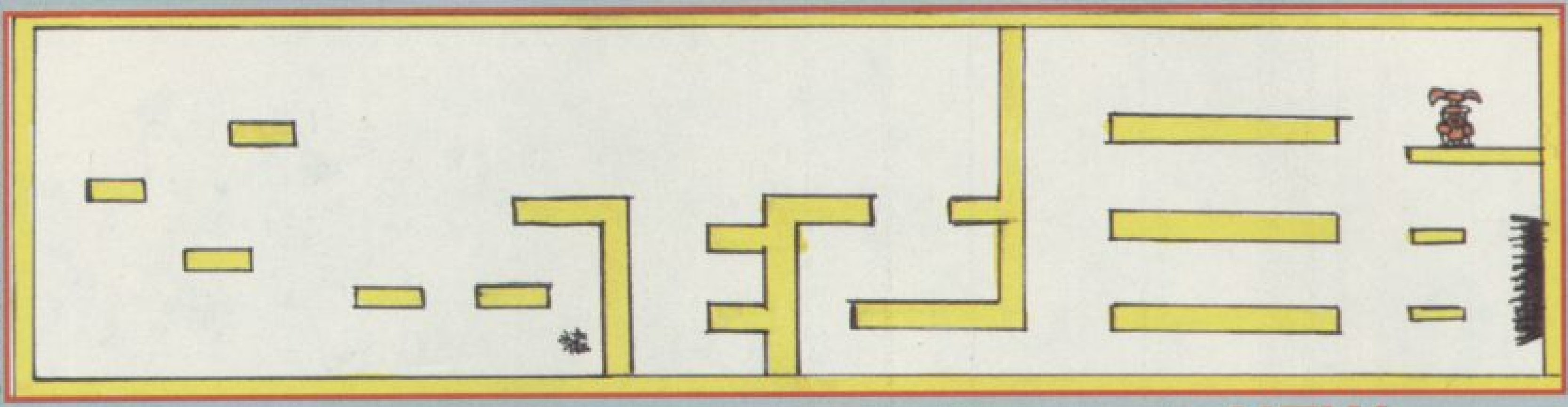
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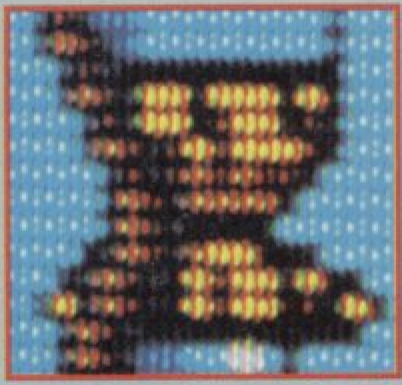




SHELLS



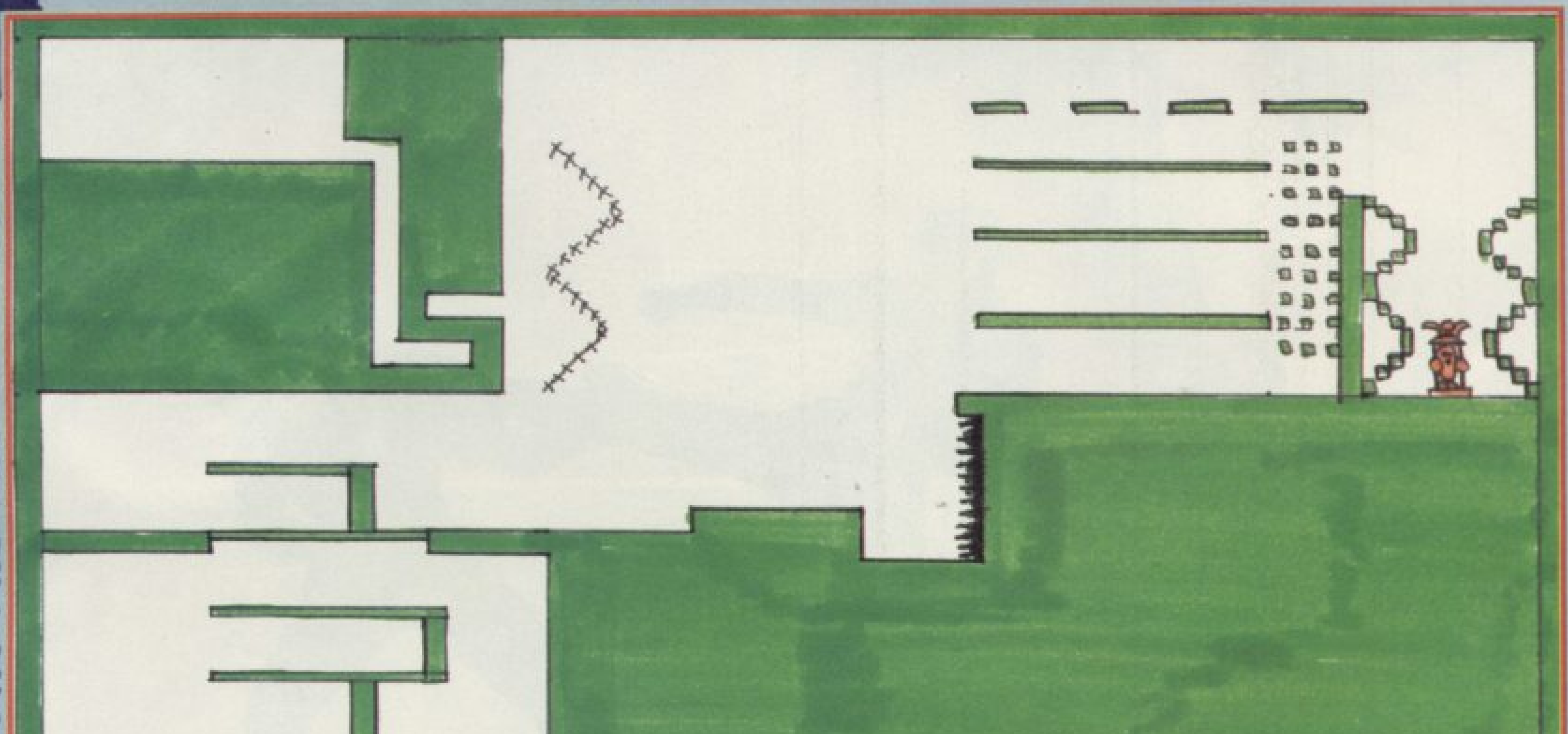
CRABS



BOOMERANG MEN

NEW ZEALAND STORY

You've been playing New Zealand Story for a good couple of months now, and after

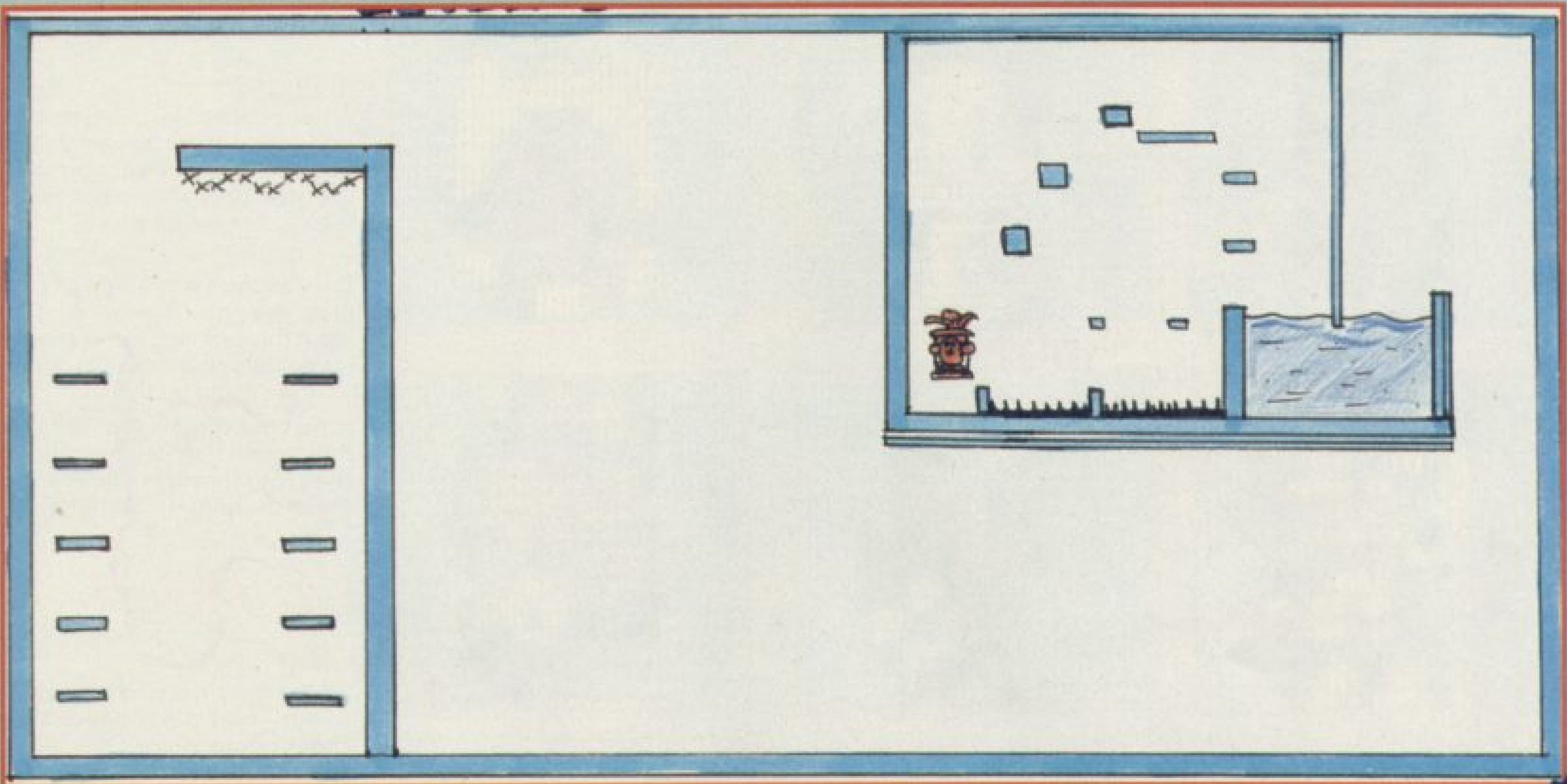




LITTLE PIGS

Do you ever find that on a casual inspection of your navel, which you'll probably agree has been around for a long time, that there's always a bit of fluff there and most annoying of all, it's never the same color as your kegs or knickers? It remains one of life's great mysteries and you will go to your grave without ever having known the how or why of your navel conundrum. Treasure Island Dizzy, has aroused a similar level of interest with readers who cannot work out the whys or wherefores of some of the puzzles so in this tips section - as promised last month, I'll be blowing the gaff on Dizzy. We're also got all the pokes on all the latest and greatest games, maps of Batman and keeping with the spookeyness of this issue - Cauldron II and Spooked maps!

CKS DEPT.





PRICKLES



PENGUINS

mini triumphs like shooting the spikey aliens and working out that the baloon comes in quite handy, you're totally stuck. Well it's time to stop your blubbing and get your thumb out of your mouth and back on your joystick, because we've got the DEFINITIVE playguide, complete with a gorgeous map of the first four levels.

LEVEL 1

SHELLS

These march left and right, turning when they reach the end of a platform. Not all are deadly but shoot them anyway or avoid them.

CRABS

These do everything in a similar manner to the shells except that when they reach the end of a platform they drop off if Tiki is below.

BOOMERANG MEN

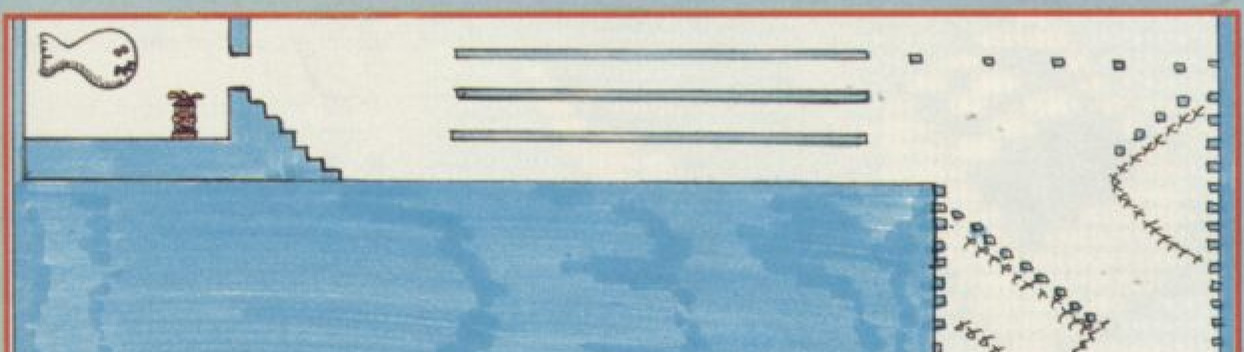
These actually ollow Tiki's movements and throw boomerangs not moving again until they have their weapon back in their hands.

LEVEL 2

Contains all the baddies from above plus..

LITTLE PIGS

They try to get to same height as Tiki so that they can shoot him and if he moves too far away to be shot they will follow.



DIRTY TRI

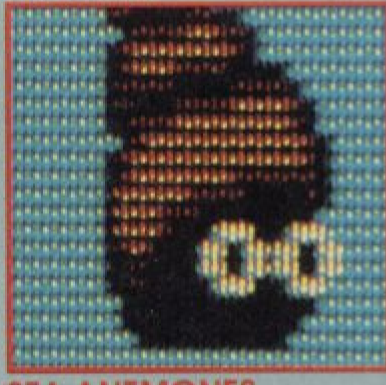

FANCY PIGS


KITTY ROBOTS


SPARKLES


SPEAR GUYS


BATS

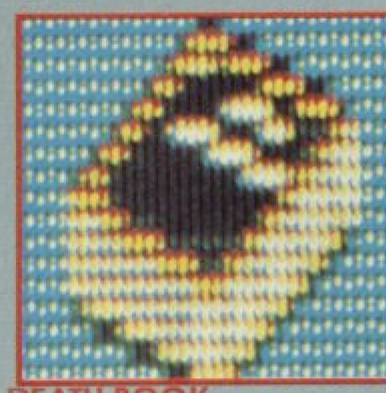

SEA ANEMONES

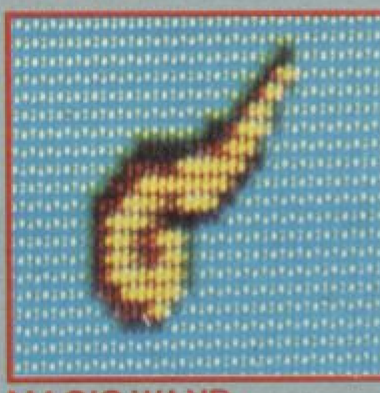

iCE WHALE

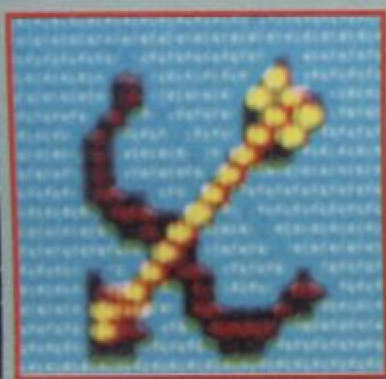

BOMB


JOYSTICK


CLOCK


DEATH BOOK


MAGIC WAND


BOW AND ARROW


LASER


POTION

LEVEL 3

PRICKLES
Another bunch of platform walkers! They look to see if Tiki's above them so they can jump towards him. If he's not there, they just truck on by.

PENGUINS
They will move towards Tiki until they are in range when they lob a brick at him, hang around for a while and then lob again!

SEA URCHINS
These get bigger and fatter as they move from left to right and are found only underwater. Shoot them from DRY land.

LEVEL 4

FANCY PIGS
Home in on Tiki and then shoot at him, wait a while and them shoot again.

SPEAR GUYS
They move to a position below Tiki, stop, throw spears at him

before repeating their actions.

KITTY ROBOTS
These cute n' deadly little pussies try to get on the same level as Tiki so they can throw their axes and stave his head in.

SPARKLES
These multiply and are deadly to the touch!

BATS
Always travel in pairs and first appear flying in the same direction as Tiki. They will try to drop stalactites onto his head.

SEA ANEMONES
They will catch and swallow (gulp!) Tiki if he swims too close.

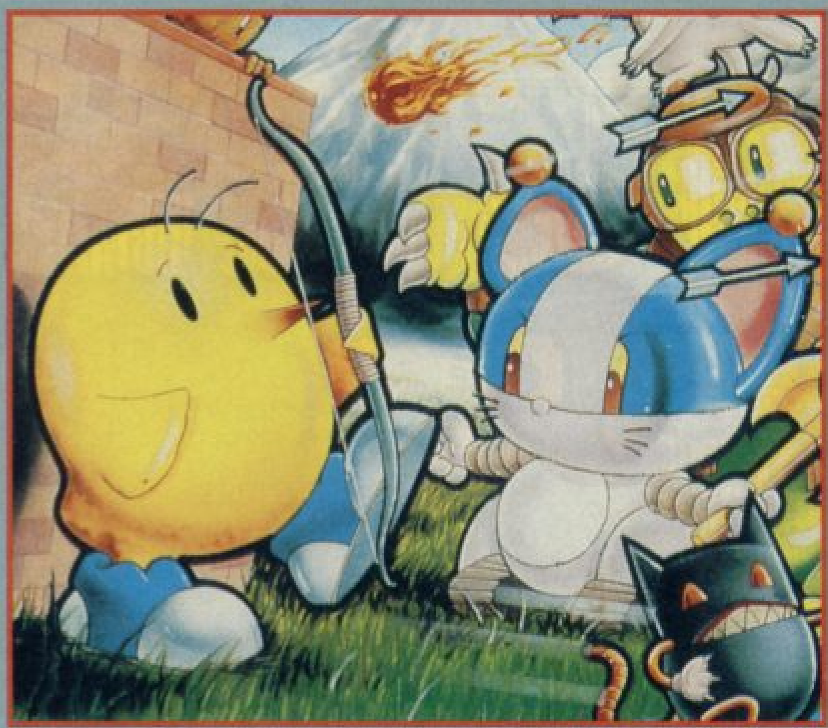
Many thanks to our resident mapper Nathan for the first 4 levels of NZS, and here they are along with a few scribblings to help you.

GENERAL
Each time Kiki kills an enemy he can pick up a fruit. Every eighth enemy he kills will leave behind not a fruit but an object. Here is the order in which the objects appear and what they do.

BOMB
Thrown left or right they explode on contact.

JOYSTICK
Gives better control of the balloons.

CKS DEPT.



CLOCK
Pick this up to 'freeze' the enemy for a while.

LASER
Shoots left and right and passes through obstacles and can be used underwater.

BOW AND ARROW
Standard weapon. Avoid it if you have something better.

DEATH BOOK
The smart bomb of the literary world. Destroys everything on screen

MAGIC WAND
Throws fireballs which bounce around until they hit something.

POTION
Makes our little hero invincible for a while.

TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY

Here 's a couple of hint's for Tresure Isand Dizzy.

OLD TREASURE CHEST
It's sole purpose is as a step for Dizzy to climb the cliff at the beginning of the game.

TOOTHPASTE
Ha! It's scarlet fish flavour so it must be a red herring!

SNORKEL
This is imperative to Dizzy when he goes underwater but be careful not to drop it whilst in the drink!

BAG OF GOLD
Used to trade with the store-keeper.

BIBLE
Apart from being a good read, the plot involving the destruction of whole cities, prostitution, sodomy and begins with lots of begetting (fnar!), it will also protect Dizzy from lightening bolts when you carry the cursed treasure past the grave-stones.

MICROWAVE
Can be traded with the shop-keeper.

CAN OF PETROL
Is used to fuel the motor for the boat.

VIDEO CAMERA
Is trader with the shopkeeper.

GLASS SWORD
Tap it on a gravestone to open up a whole new world!

SINCLAIR ABUSER MAG
A healthy bonus is awarded when this is dropped in a (un)suitable place.

CURSED TREASURE
Surprise! This can be traded with the shopkeeper.

BOAT
Is for getting back to the Yolk-folk.

MOTOR
For the boat of course! How can Dizzy row wearing a pair of boxing gloves?

IGNITION KEY
Used to start the boat once you've got a motor to start and filled it with petrol.

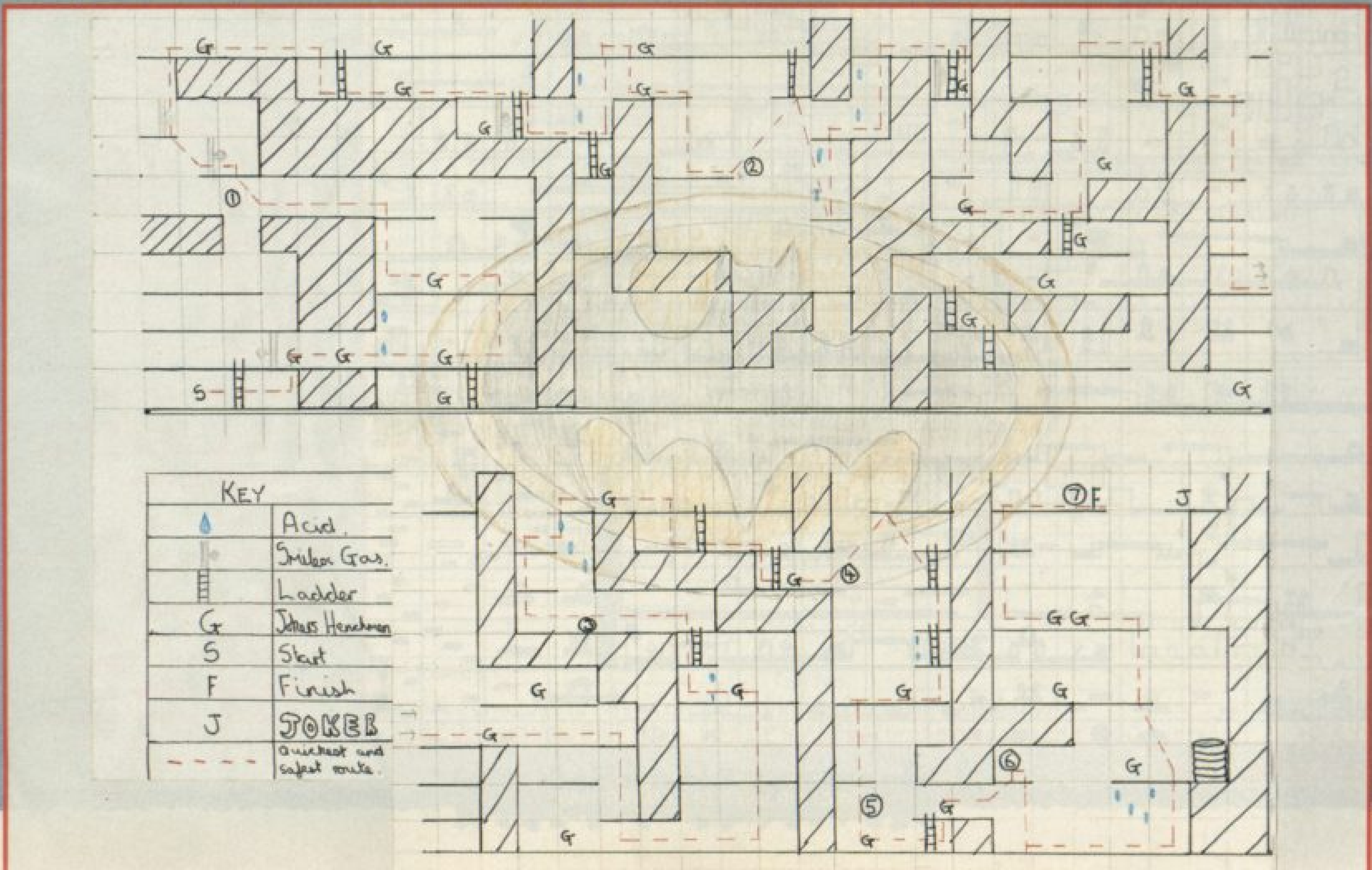
OLD KEY
Is used for opening the door to the secret kitchen.

INFRA-RED DETONATOR
This, Michael Stretch, me old mate, is used in the right place with the dynamite to detonate it and unblock the mine.

DYNAMITE
This needs to be used with the Detonator to unblock the mine.

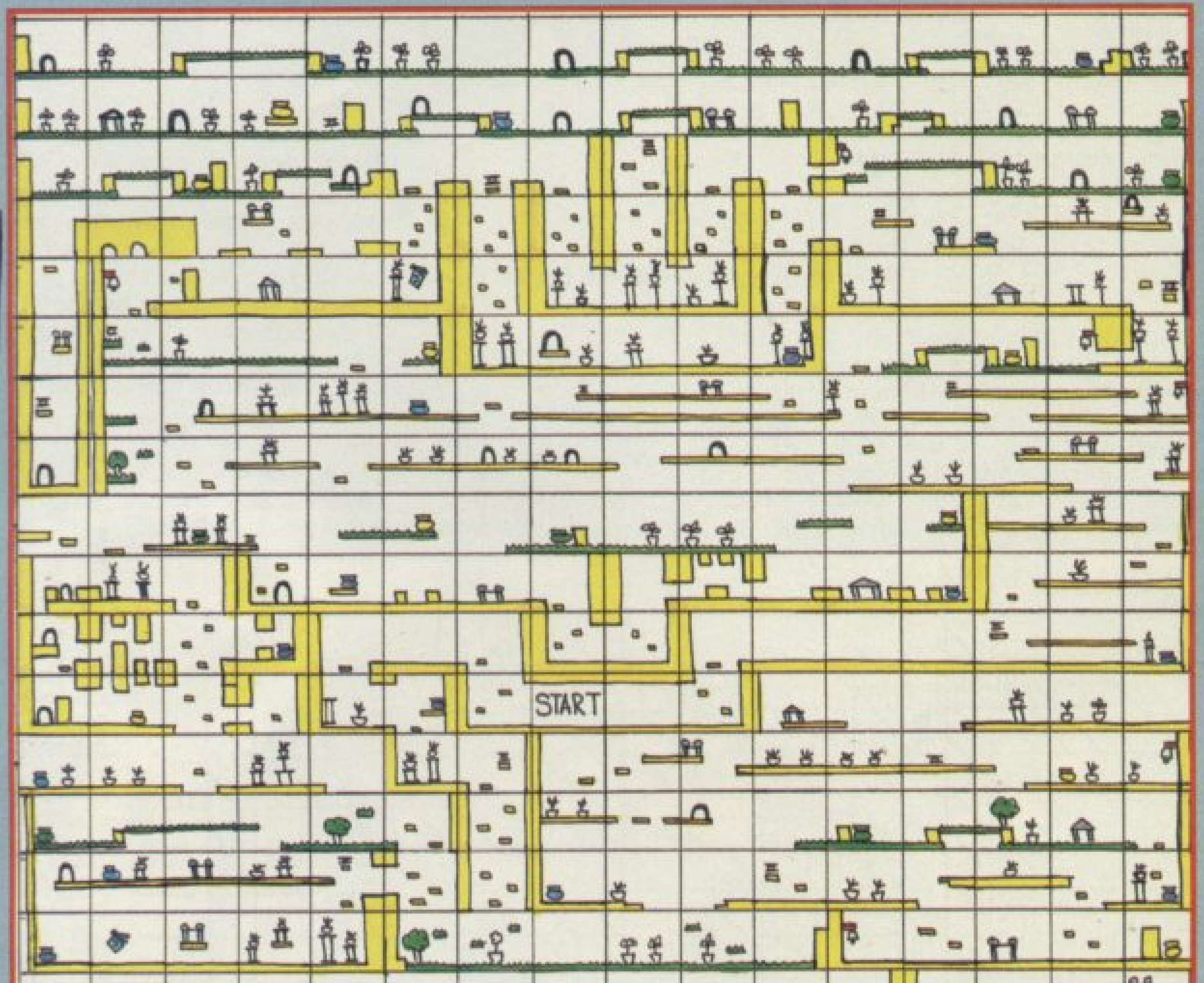
SPADE
Andrew Prince, of Winchester. Use the spade to dig up the moving rock on the screen previous to the crab in the cave. This will unleash an underwater geyser. Step into the bubbles and you will be transported to another level.

AXE
Use this on the rickety bridge to reveal a really tough series of caverns.



DIRTY TRICKS DEPT.

There you have it - more tips than you can shake Dizzy's snorkel at for the first main stage of Treasure Island Dizzy. Moretips in the next few months as you travel the world of Treasure Island Dizzy. Also, there'll be news of the forthcoming release of Treasure Island Dizzy III - Fantasy World Dizzy and all the maps that there just wasn't room for in this issue. So watch this space for the latest and greatest in Dirty Tricks! See you next month!



SPOOKED

POKES CORNER

DOUBLE DRAGON
37693,0 Lev 1 Inf lives
37815,0 Lev 2 " "
37813,0 Lev 3a " "
37794,0 Lev 3b " "

DRAGON NINJA
43455,8 Repulsion
38918,0 Infinite lives
38684,1 Infinite time

LAST NINJA
36576,198 Lev 1 Infinite lives
35993,198 Lev 2 " "
36751,198 Lev 3 " "

INDIANA JONES (The last crusade)
33310,X X = number of lives

ROBOCOP
25917,0 Infinite lives
25424,0 Infinite time
25795,0 No pause when shot
34039,0 Turbo speed

WEC LE MANS
26110,34 Infinite time

STORM LORD
56877,127 Infinite lives
56877,201 Immunity
56890,255 Invincibility

SPOOKED
60504,255 Infinite time

BATMAN
54067,0
54832,201
54708,0
54719,195
Use all four poke together to get infinite energy and time.

DYNAMITE DUX
44277,0
44401,0
Use together to gain immortality.

VINDICATORS
37913,0Inf lives player 1
38094,0Inf lives player 2

DIE ALIEN SLIME
32855,24 Infinite energy
33227,195 Infinite time

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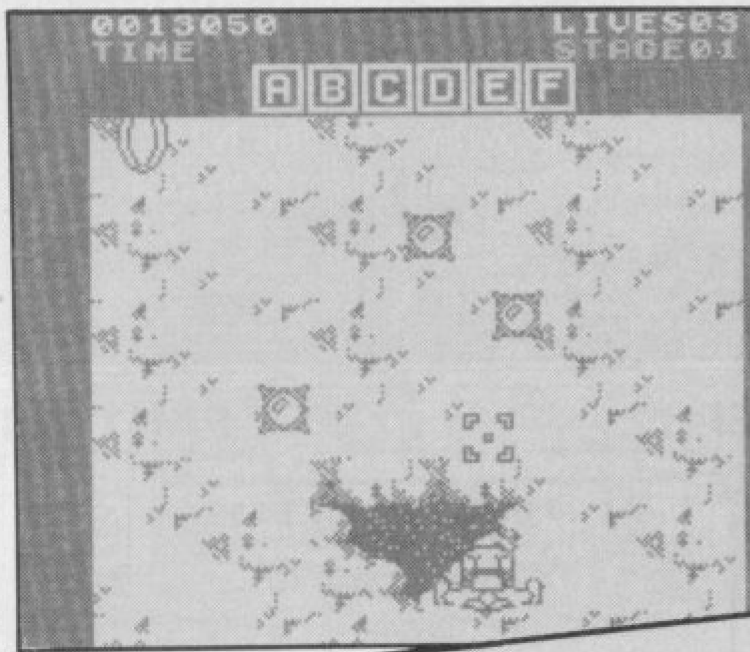
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ACTION FIGHTER



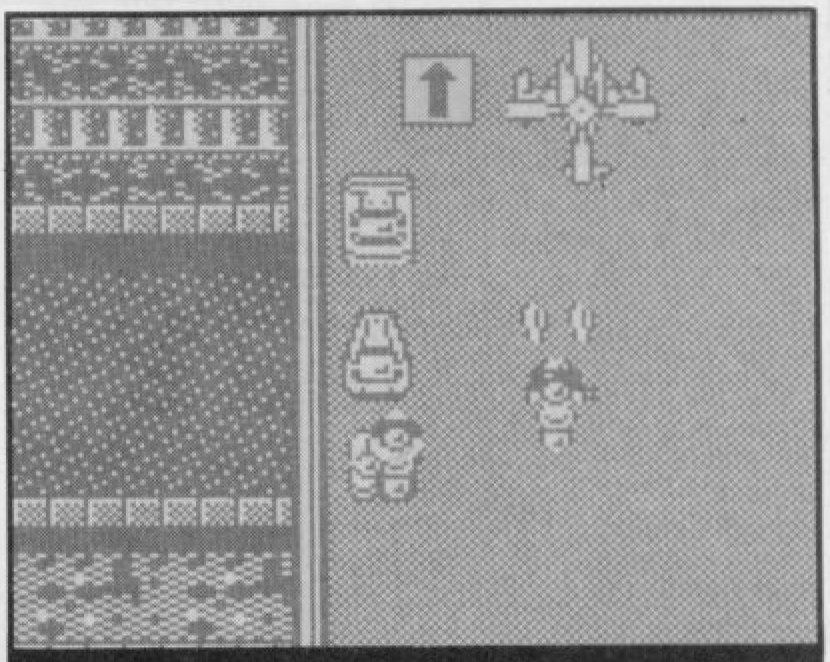
Vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups have been around for some time and although there has been some goodies, they're not exactly high scoring in the originality stakes anymore. So, for a game to succeed in this format it must be good and have an original element - or it needs to be a conversion of a popular coin -op. *Action Fighter* is taken from the Sega arcade machine and has you in the driving seat of the latest transforming vehicle. It's a plane, it's a car, it's a motorbike - and it's your mission to destroy the enemy's attack force, both on the ground and in the air.

Play begins with you on a motorcycle that's equipped with Koni suspension, full fairing and a single machine gun. The manoeuverability is very good from left to right and acceleration is as brisk as one would expect from a motorbike. It's remarkable similarity to a bike unfortunately extends to its complete lack of protection as you will find to your cost if something hits you from behind and bike and rider become a large patch of strawberry jam.

The roads you must follow in the beginning are populated with enemy cars, motorbikes and the odd ambulance. You must shoot the enemy and for every six that you vape, an icon labeled from A to E will float down the screen and by driving over it, you will light up the appropriate letter at the top of the screen as you pick up each 'part'. Collect four parts (labeled from A to D) and you can them change the bike into a car at the press of the spacebar. The car doesn't accelerate or handle like the bike but it is more resilient to the odd bash. So why not just stay as the car? Ah ha, well there's a helicopter that whirls onto the screen every now and again and it will try to destroy the car. Change back to the motorbike and it will sail past completely ignoring the scruffy little throttle jockey.

Every now and then a lorry marked SEGA will appear on the screen, mysteriously clearing the road of any enemy vehicles. This is a mobile mechanic with a difference. Pull up to the back of it with the car or the bike and it will draw your vehicle inside and attach double fire power, missiles, reverse firing or even a limited invulnerability. If you crash or are killed however it's back to spaz fire so it's a good idea to watch the indicator at the top of the screen that warns you how the road ahead is going to turn. When you see the Y shape it means the ramps are coming so watch out!

Once you've collected up to the F icon you turn automatically into the jet car. Once in the air, you fly at one of two speeds, beginning at crawler pace and speeding up when the flying bonus is collected. You continue on to your mission objective as given at the beginning of the stage, with target being either shot or bombed depending on their altitude. When flying, the mobile mechanic will still make the odd call to equip you with add-ons, but at this point they've traded in the lorry for a large helicopter.



The helicopter passes harmlessly overhead as you let fly with a twin missile salvo. The icon shows a straight road so let's go!



Ha ha! There you are! Yes, the mobile mechanic's lorry has turned into a large helicopter as it draws you in, to beef you up!

ARCADE REVIEW — FAX BOX

Great first stage but lacking in lasting appeal.

ACTION FIGHTER** Label: **Rainbird** Author: **In House** Price: **9.99** Memory: **48/128/+3** Joystick: **No Sinclair Option.

Reviewer Garth Sumpter

GRAPHICS	SOUND
	65
PLAYABILITY	**LAST ABILITY**

OVERALL 66

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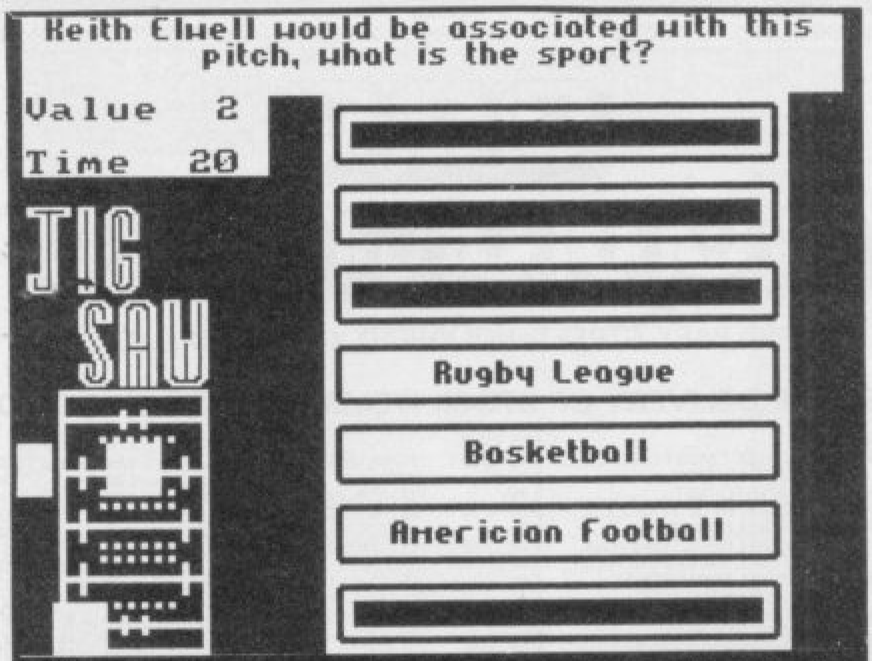
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GAMES REVIEW

SPORTING TRIANGLES

Quiz games have never really been that easy a concept to deal with on the Spectrum. They're usually licenced from other popular Quiz entities; Trivial Pursuit, Pictionary etc. And they're rarely better that their conventional counterparts.

Recently, though, virtually every quizzy game around has been linked to a TV show of some sort. We've had Every Second Counts, A Question of Sport, Bullseye - the lot.



The jigsaw round. Each time you get a question wrong, another part of the pitch reveals itself. Match up the lines to a sport.

Sporting Triangles continues this questionable tradition, and replicates - reasonably accurately - the Central TV quiz show.

After setting up a team of three players (human or computer, as you wish) and defining their preferred subject areas, you are launched into the game proper.

The overall aim of the game is to progress around the Sporting Triangle, landing the Question Marker on squares indicating subject areas. Different points are awarded for answering questions inside your subject area, in no-mans' "general sport" land and there are big points to be had by answering a question in the oppositions chosen area.

Now, before we go any further, I'm afraid I'll have to blow the whistle on the game's biggest fault. Get this; the quiz is split up into a number of rounds. Some are multiple choice, but the bulk of the questions simply sit there; "Which county did Fred Truman briefly rejoin in 1806?" asking for an answer. At this point, boxes with "Answer" and "pass" appear. If you haven't the fairest idea, go for "pass". Otherwise, hit the other box and type your answer.

NO! No need to type in your answer! The computer will TELL you the answer and all you have to do is announce whether you got the question right or wrong. Mad. Mad mad mad mad mad. Mad. All the answers are in the machine, so why rely in the questionable honesty of the players? Moreover, why tell them what the answer is? You'll only ever be able to ask each question once

Madness aside, the four stages play through in similar fashion to the TV version. The astonishingly lengthy disc access time was some way redeemed by the fact that the code remained resident in our 128K machine once loaded.

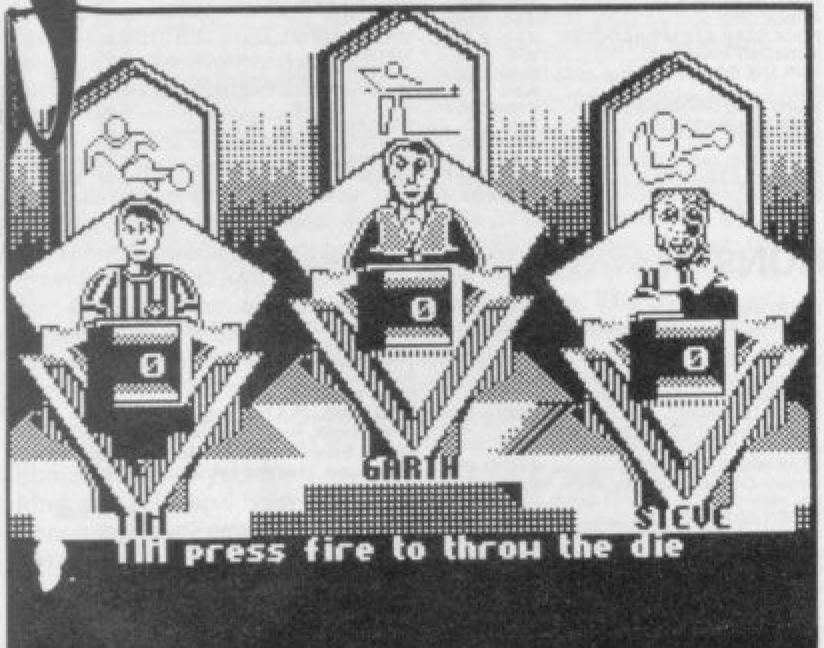
Apparently the length of the load is caused by the random numbering of the questions, supposedly in order to produce a new game each time. Surely it would have been more worthwhile to include a sensible answering system.

Despite these irritating points, the bare bones of the game is entirely sound. There are a great many challenging questions to be answered, and although a sports quiz is a sports quiz is a sports quiz, there is enough variety in the "rounds" to hold your interest for a while.

The Hit for Six round presents Seven multiple choice answers to a question. Each time you get it wrong, the machine will give you another clue and decrease the number of points available.

The Jigsaw Picture round is similar but instead of written clues, each incorrect answer will yield a further section of a visual clue.

Sporting Triangles is a reasonable conversion of a pretty silly idea. Neither fab or poor, it doesn't deserve to be ignored, but it hardly demands attention either.



Will Garth get a question right before he goes to sleep and Tim leaps into the lead.? Looks like they've already gone to bed!



ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

Label: CDS Author: In House
Price: 8.95 Memory:
48K/128K Joystick: Various

Lots of Questions. Not much fun.

GRAPHICS	SOUND
65	60
60	60
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

Reviewer:

OVERALL 61

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

SO WHY DO SPECCY OWNERS NEED THE SAM Coupé?



You've been building up your Spectrum software collection for years. You want a computer with better sound, better graphics, more power - but you don't want to lose your software.
The Coupé is the computer for you. Four screen modes with a choice from 128 colours, a six-channel stereo sound chip, 256K RAM (expandable to 512K) - yet by actually slowing the Coupé down, we allow most of your 48K Spectrum software to run in the Coupé's level 1 mode.



Growth

You never stand still with a computer. You're always learning, always growing, always wanting to do more. With the Coupé, your computer can grow with you.
Memory can be expanded from 256K to 512K. One or two 1 MB disk drives can be added. There are output ports for almost everything we can think of, and an expansion connector for things that other people develop later. And all of it simply slots in - no screws, no soldering, no hardware expertise.

Graphics

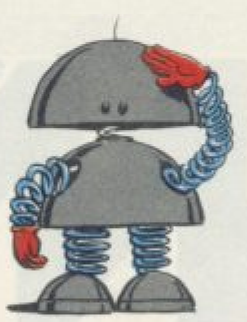
See the full range of 128 colours on an ordinary TV set. Or better still, use a video monitor for really high definition. Best of all, use a modern TV with SCART to get the quality of a monitor on an ordinary TV set.
The Coupé has four graphics modes. Even at the lowest level - Spectrum emulation - you can change the colours in the the software to take full advantage of the palette. In modes 3 and 4, you can display up to 16 colours per line, a different colour for every pixel in a 256 x 192 pixel display; or have an 80-column 512 x 192 display for word processing and spreadsheets.
And free with the Coupé comes FLASH!, a software package by ace Swedish programmer, Bo Jangeborg, designed to give you total control over these powerful graphics.





Music

There won't be a better buy for all you aspiring electronic musicians. The Coupé features a full implementation of MIDI - MIDI In, Out and Through - with 16 channel capability, and MGT is promoting a full range of MIDI support software. Better still, the Coupé features an 8 octave, 6 channel stereo sound chip. For sensational sound effects, just plug in your headphones.
Play it again SAM!



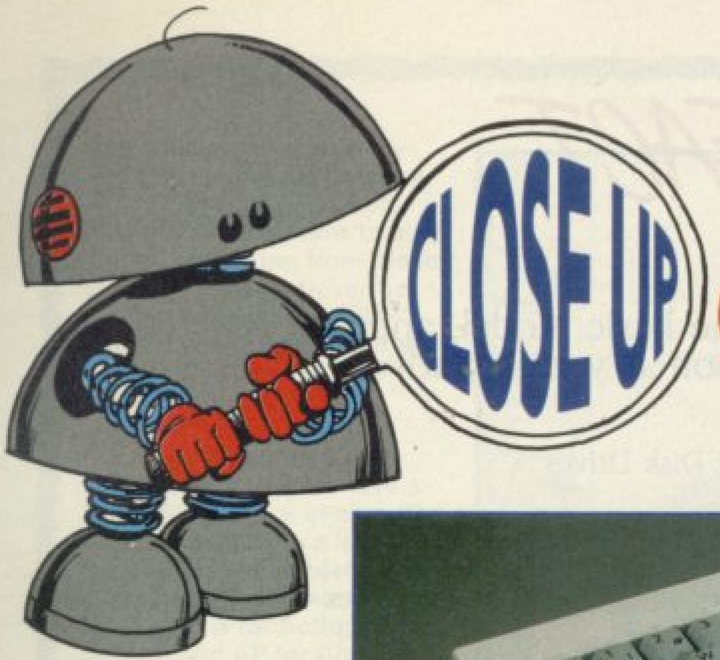
SAM. No, the computer's not called SAM, it's called the Coupé. This is SAM - he's the character who will guide you through the manual.

MILES GORDON TECHNOLOGY plc



SAM coupé





coupé

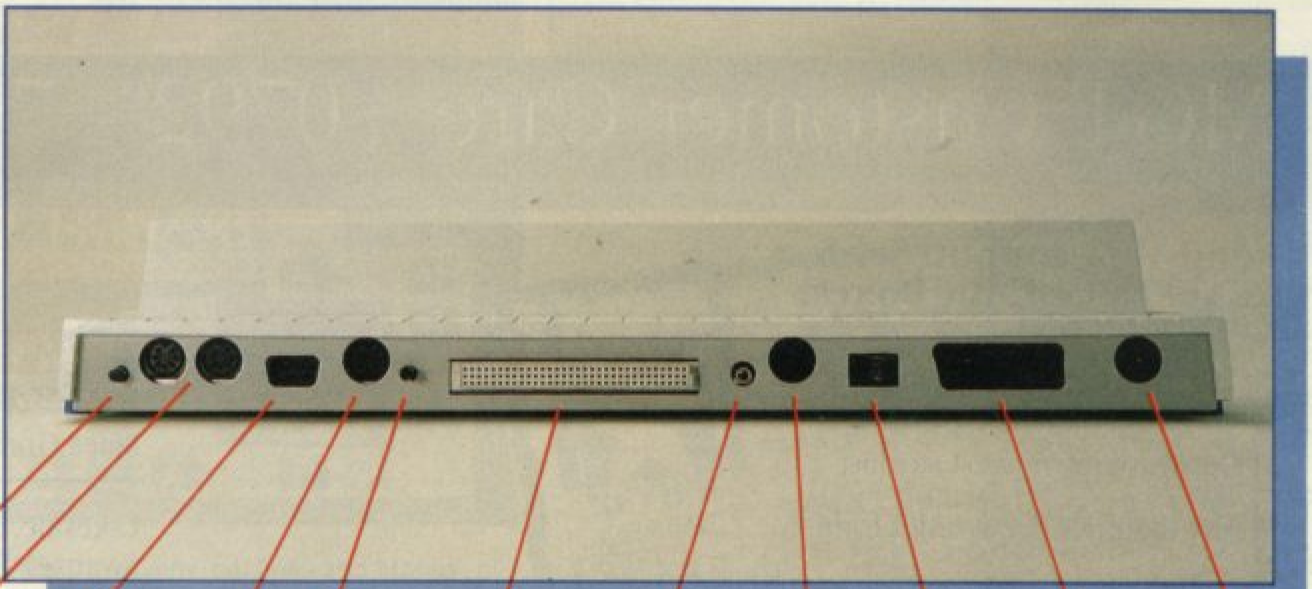


A 72 key full-sized, full travel **Keyboard**, designed with a professional feel. The keys are "soft", allowing you to re-program and re-position them if you wish. On the right, there are 10 function keys, which double as a numeric keypad.

The Coupé's slot-in disk drive



The basic model of the Coupé comes ready to work with software loaded from a standard cassette recorder. But you can also add one or two 1 MB 3.5" **Disk Drives**. These are ultra-slimline drives from Citizen in a special case which allows you simply to slot them in when you're ready.



A SAMatter of FACT

The Coupé costs £169.95 (including VAT).

This is the basic model, and you can add on - just as soon as you're ready:

- 1 or 2 Disk Drives
- An extra 256K of memory
- Special communications interfaces - RS232 and parallel
- The MGT Mouse

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Ask MGT's Customer Care people.

The Coupé will run most of your 48K (but not your 128K) software. Which titles? Ask the MGT Customer Care people.

And guess what? You can even change all the colours in your current games.

Watch out too for the brand-new Coupé-dedicated releases from US Gold, Codemasters, Activision....and the list is growing.

Where can you get the SAM Coupé? Well there'll be some in the shops before Christmas. Call the Customer Care department and they'll tell you where to go and what to do.



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GAMES REVIEW!

PICTIONARY

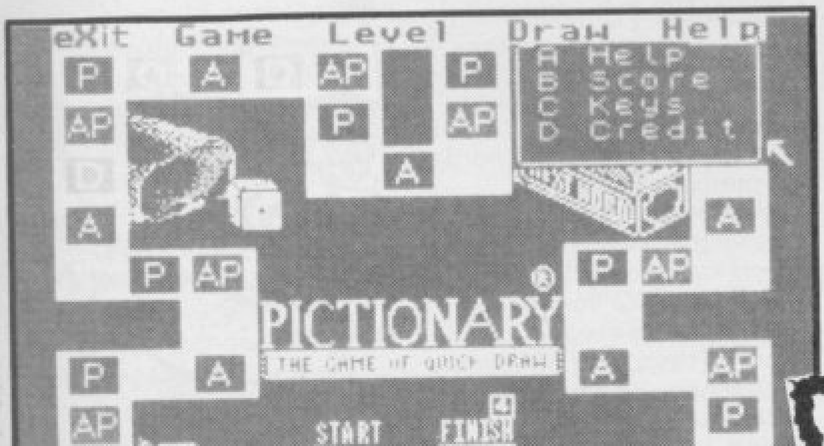
Having never actually played Pictionary, the board game meself, I didn't have a clue how to play this latest offering from those chaps at Domark. Nevertheless, I'd been informed by those who had that it was a right laugh and provides hours of giggles.

If you haven't played *Pictionary* either let me tell you how to play. You have a board with a track of coloured squares, each with a letter representing an subject - P for Person/Place/Animal, O for Object, A for Action, D for Difficult and AP for All Play (any kind of word).



Chuck the dice and move your counter to one of the coloured squares. Pick a card with a list of words on it and then draw your subject word within a time limit. If your team guesses the word correctly you get another go. Get from the start of the board to the finish before the other team and you've won.

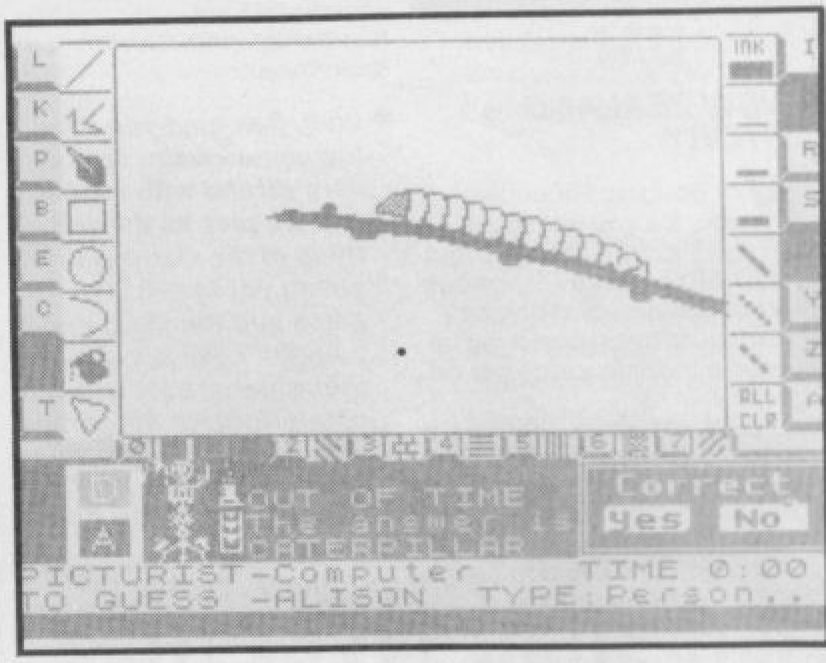
Easy or wot? The computer version works in almost the same way. You can play it One player where the computer draws you piccies and you try to guess what they are by calling out your answer.



Once you've shouted the answer the computer then asks if you got it right or wrong and you have to enter Yes or No. So if it's just you and the computer and no one else to keep an eye on you, you can ruddy well cheat can't you - "oh yes I got that one completely right, another go for me, I think". Surely it would be a better idea if you could actually key in your answer. Call me a moany old bag but it seems to make sense to me.

So that's the one player stuff out of the way. When you play with two teams (or three or four, if you like) it's time to don your artists smock, stick a paintbrush in the corner of ya gob and draw the piccies yourself. This is where things get a little tricky.

You see the game incorporates a wee drawing package and you have to use the cursor keys along with a palette of different lines and blobby bit to create your masterpiece. The problem is you have to do all your creating within two minutes, which is pretty difficult as it takes at least a day to master the drawing program. Not much scope for spontaneous fun... Dwayne: "Wanna play Pictionary Tel?" Tel: "Whoor yeah Dwayne", Dwayne: "Well borrow my copy, learn how to use the drawing bit and I'll see you in three weeks time"



To be fair, *Pictionary* does have a practice mode, which lets you spend as much time as you like sharpening up your pencil skills, so I suggest you master this first before attempting the game proper. So, what more can I say? *Pictionary*, is good fun and costs a lot less that the actual board game that weighs in at a hefty £20, but it's a lot flipping easier to sling the board on the living room rug and crack out the pencils, me thinks.

FAX BOX

ARCADE REVIEW

Plenty of fun if you've time to master the tricky bits

Label: Domark Author: In-house Price: £9.95 Memory: 48k/128k Joystick: Various

Reviewer: Alison

GRAPHICS	SOUND	PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY	OVERALL
65	55	75	48	69

the writ



JIM

NEW ZEALAND STORY

Yo! Douglas, For once in your life you got something right. I am talking about New Zealand Story. It has cool weapons including bombs, lasar gun, fireballs and my favourite the little spaceship on level 2-1.
There is a question that I'd like to ask you, you Fat punk. Who left that lipstick on your neck? Tell that Biddie Basher Chris to have a shave 'cos he looks like a gorilla! If you don't print this letter I'll be reading a C***h and a Y*** S******* next month.
Paul Hallam, Walsden, Lancs.

● ***Well Paul, what uniformed abusiveness is this. I always get things right - or at least I think they're right. The lipstick mark was left over from a snogging session and Chris doesn't look like a gorilla - he IS a gorilla but he's still much more intelligent than you! Especially if you think you can get a better spectrum read outside of these pages.***

FORGOTTON WORLDS

Dear Jim, Your review of Forgotten Worlds was marvelous, I congratulate you. It was well worth the money. The range of controls is superb and buying guns, shields etc from a shop is a great new idea. The graphics and colour are pretty cool for the speccy and the two player mode makes the game even better. But don't you think that the 85% was a bit harsh? Didn't you think it deserved 90% or more as playability and lastability must push the score up a bit. Please, please, please print this letter or I will deform your pretty face.
Ben Bartlet, High Garret, Braintree.

● ***Well, Ben glad you liked the game - we're always very careful with marks that we give as the worst thing in the world is to spend your cash on a game and then find that you don't like it. I thought that 85% was about right for the game 'cos anything in the 90's really means DO NOT MISS THIS GAME!***

LICENCE TO KILL

Oi you! (Who me?) Yes you!! The one with the lipstick on his neck and a haircut straight out of an Elvis movie. What the heck are you playing at? ***New Zealand Story*** 82%. Bob Monkhouse can tell better jokes. It's soooo smooth. The graphics are brillo and the sound - give it to Stock, Aiken and Waterman to release - and what did you give it? A mere 80%. There are loads of baddies to shoot including at end of levels like the big, fat, whale and the octopus. You can even pick up weapons as you go. Come on Jimbo. Any more reviews like that and you should get back in touch with Tamara and we all know how crap she was.
P.S. On your screen shots they were all based on levels 1-1 and 1-2. You wimp! Don't insult any more games or I may be forced to read .... Ooops! There I go. I nearly insulted your mag again. At least you gave N.Z.S. a classic.
L Hawson, New Ollerton, Newark.

● ***Well, Mr Hawson, it would seem you think that a classic is not a high enough accolade for Forgotten Worlds. There isn't a higher recommendation for a game. The mark of 80 shows its combination of Graphics, Sound, Playability and Lastability and the Classic sticker means that it was the best of its genre for that month. As for the screen shots, we try to give a flavour of the game and not to give away any of the later levels and spoil your enjoyment of what is, a super game.***

LICENCE TO KILL

To Jim (can't review a thing) Douglas, I read your review of ***Licence To Kill***, it said "Better than previous efforts but hardly a premium Bond." I'd played my friend's game of ***The Living Daylights*** and that wasn't too bad - with an ancient SU poke from one of my older mags it was quite good. So I thought I part with some money and buy ***Licence To Kill***. You definitely under rated it. How far did you get into the game? From the look of the screen shots you didn't get past level 1 and then thought 'The other levels can't be too bad' and gave it 60% Okay, so the screen shots don't look too good, but it's the gameplay that really counts. My ratings would've been: Graphics 70% Sound (48K)65% (128K)83% Playability 65% Lastability 68%. Other than this slight mistake, I still think your mag is the best and keep up the brill megatapes.
Matthew Pentney, Highworth, Swindon.

● ***My name is Douglas, James Douglas. Danda dan dan Dan-dan-dan danda dan dan dan dan da daadaa da da dan. What are all these accusations about my screen shots anyway? We always play the games extensively (yes, even the naff ones!) and so there's not much time left to take the screen shots so sometimes we don't always get shots of later levels. Anyway, I've told Garth to get shots of later levels and he's grunted something like..Oh hum, here I am, brain the size of planet....which probably means "Yes sir, Mr Douglas sir!"***



CHRIS

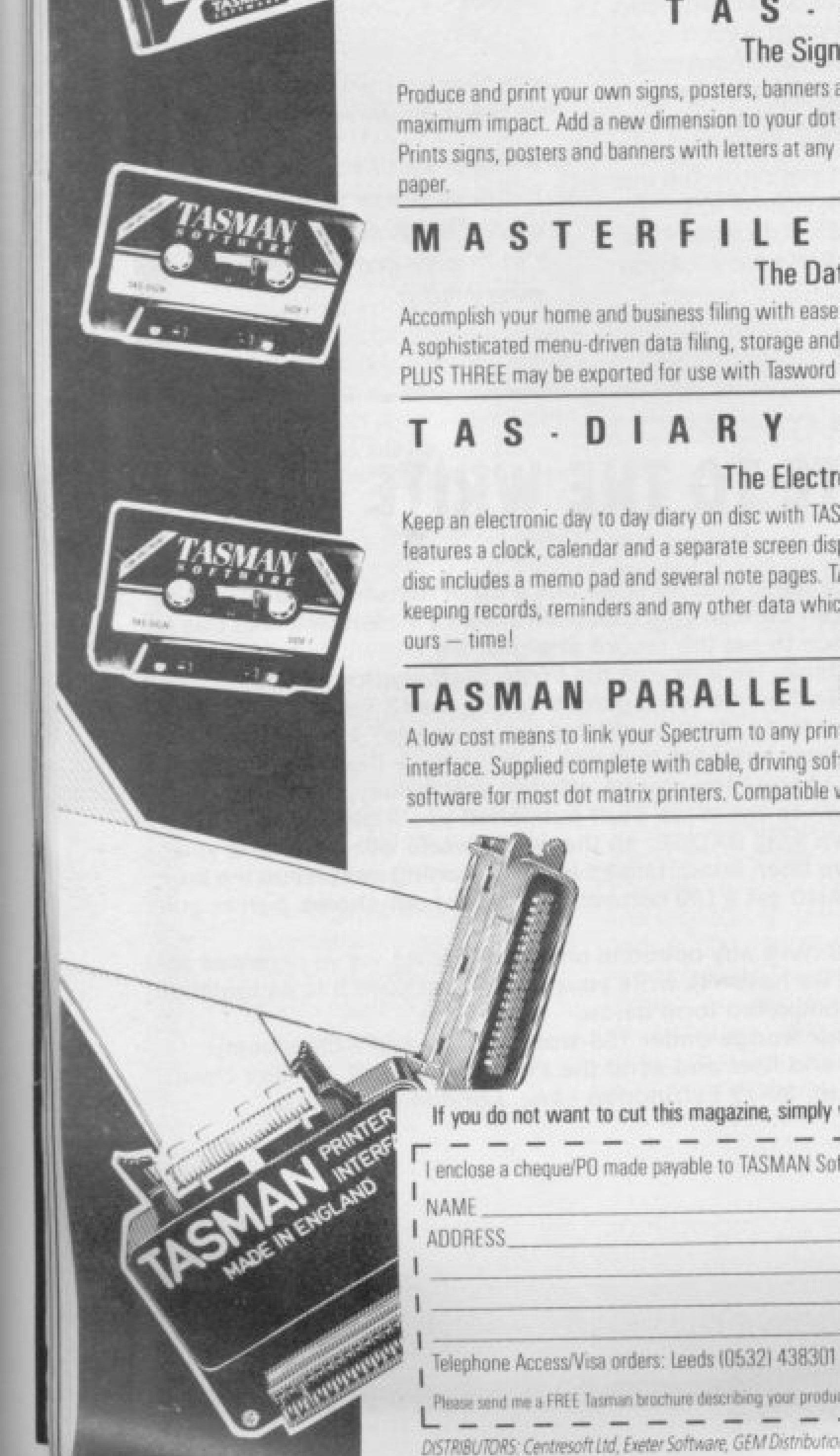
RED HEAT

Dear Chris,I am writing this letter on b*g roll because I have wasted all my money on envelopes and stamps . I have been writing to SU ever since Kami Bear was wearing his heavily armed nappies and



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GAMES REVIEW



The menu screen from where you can choose a game or choose a member of your team. This Shaaxa looks a bit handy though!



PURPLE SATURN DAY

Allons-nous! C'est la nouvelle jeux au Exxos, les joli garcons Francais... oh sorry. I keep forgetting not everyone is as cosmopolitan as the mighty SU staff, who can play games with instructions in French! Still, maybe we should have tried it in English too; phrases like "On this day, they come to vanquish you, friend!" suggest that the instructions alone would have been a laugh a minute.

Like many other French titles, Purple Saturn Day looks marvellous, but it's annoyingly difficult to play and unnecessarily obscure. Designed by the team behind the mind-boggling Captain Blood, PSD is in fact a sort of galactic Olympics; the Purple Saturn Day of the title being a regular astronomical conjunction which marks the start of the Games. So why didn't they just call it Galactic Olympics, eh?

Anyoldhow, the aim is to compete in four events against seven alien species. The eight competitors are divided into four pairs, and the winners of the quarter-finals go into the semi-finals, the overall winner getting a galactic snog with the Purple Saturn Queen, who probably looks likean inside-out hedgehog, but we don't know for sure, not having managed to win yet.

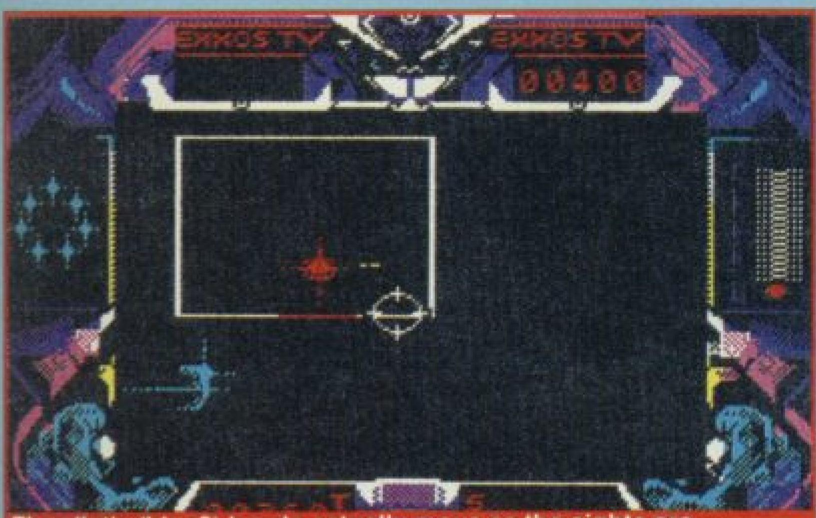
The screens on which you choose your alien teammates according to their agility, mental powers, aggression and other characteristics, is admirably detailed. Also truly bon are the intro screens for each of the four events, which you can play in any order you want.

Ring Pursuit is a 3-D race game; speed through the asteroid belt, avoiding obstacles, taking the correct course left or right at coloured markers, and knocking your opponent off course. There's no time limit, but if you stay ahead you score more points. This game is very fast and exciting, and is the most easily grasped of the events.

Tronic Slider is a sort of 3-D billiards in which you have to chase down energy balls, again bashing your opponent to shake his balls loose, fnar. With the help of a position display...

Brain Bowler is very odd. Hovering over a maze-like electronic map of an alien brain, you have to redirect moving energy sparks into your collector by hitting switches at the right moment. Extremely fiddly and irritating, Brain Bowler is likely to make you clench your teeth with sheer frustration rather than excitement. The last game, Time Jump, is pretty abstract; the aim is to move through time by catching energy sparks which dart across the screen. When you have sufficient power you hold down the fire button to build up time energy, then release it to jump... weird psychedelic effects fill the screen, and you wonder whether you are actually achieving anything. Completely baffling, this one.

PSD is certainly different, and if you like to see the Spectrum pushed to the graphical limit, this is the one for you. But if you ask me (and let's face it, what else am I paid for), not enough thought has gone into the gameplay.



The pilot's (blue?) hands actually move as the sights are manipulated to catch the darting energy saprks in Time Jump.

ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

Label: Exxos Author: Rene Herbulot
£8.95 Memory: 48K/128K Joystick:
Reviewer Chris Jenkins various Price:

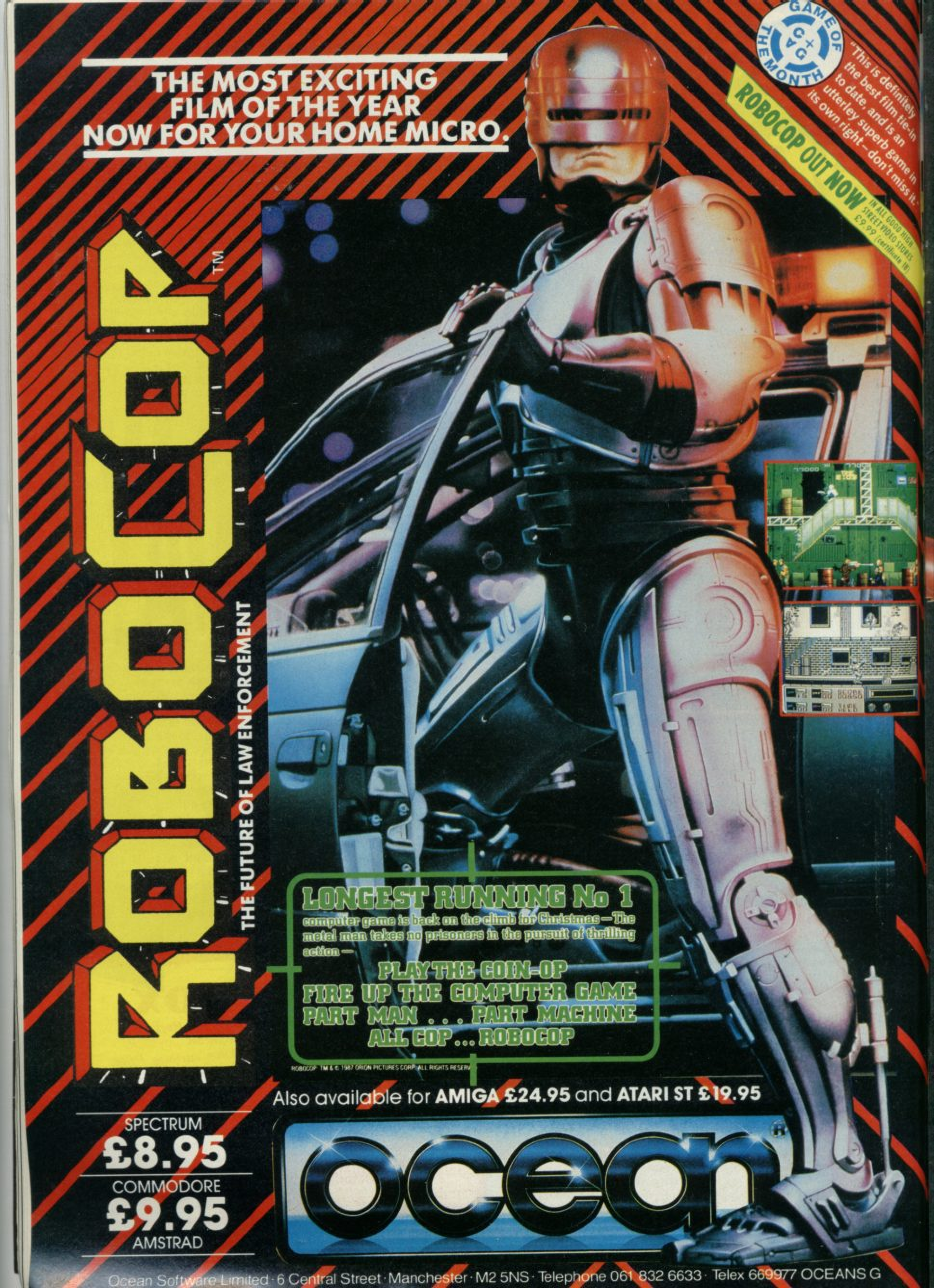
GRAPHICS	SOUND
89	60
67	61
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

Just like French girls, lovely to look at but a bit funny to play with

Reviewer: [signature]

OVERALL 75%

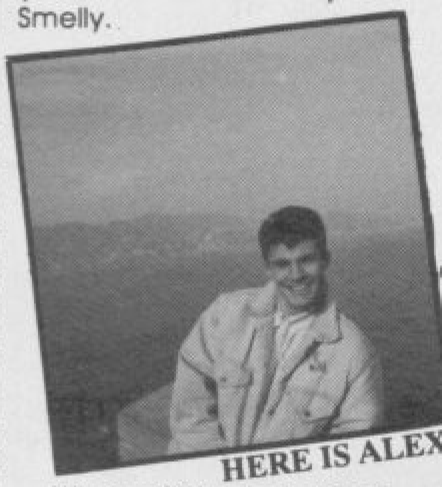
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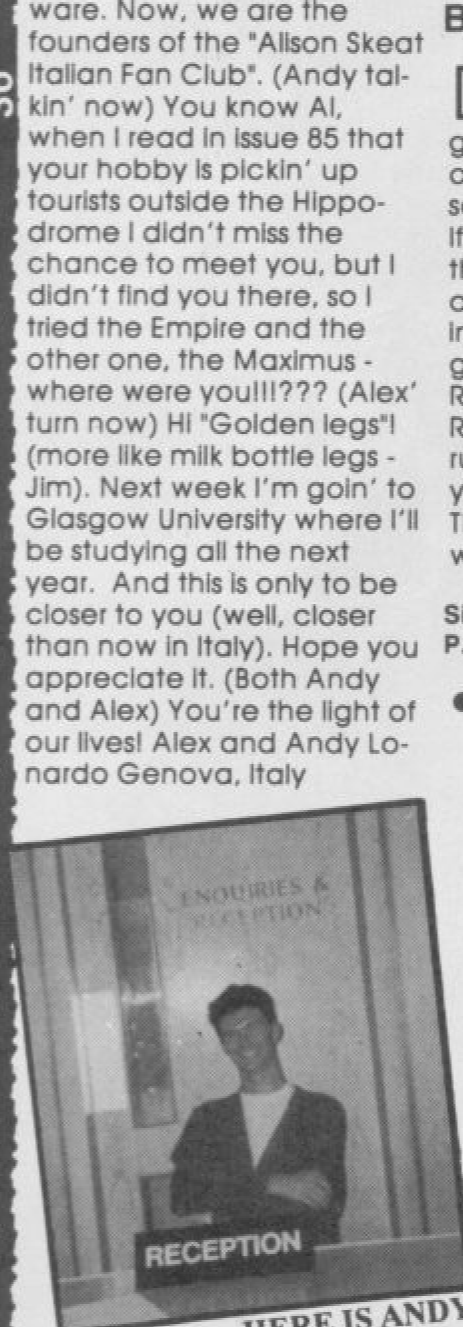
WE LOVE AL TOO - THE WHOLE POPULATION OF ITALY

Dear Smelly, This letter is not for you, we are sendin' it to you 'cos it's the only way to write to Al "The princess" Skeat and gettin' the letter printed at the same time. That's all for you, Wayne "the scoblet" (what's a scoblet - WS) Smelly.



HERE IS ALEX

We are SU's biggest fans, we started buying it in August '85 - the one with Roland Rat on the cover. The SU team used to print the list of the available Speccy software. Now, we are the founders of the "Alison Skeat Italian Fan Club". (Andy talkin' now) You know Al, when I read in issue 85 that your hobby is pickin' up tourists outside the Hippodrome I didn't miss the chance to meet you, but I didn't find you there, so I tried the Empire and the other one, the Maximus - where were you!!??? (Alex' turn now) Hi "Golden legs"! (more like milk bottle legs - Jim). Next week I'm goin' to Glasgow University where I'll be studying all the next year. And this is only to be closer to you (well, closer than now in Italy). Hope you appreciate it. (Both Andy and Alex) You're the light of our lives! Alex and Andy Lonardo Genova, Italy



HERE IS ANDY

- *ALISON SAYS: CAIO ALEX AND ANDY, THANKS MATIES FOR YOUR LETTER - BIG RASPBERRIES TO THE REST OF THE SU TEAM, I GOT A FAN LETTER AND YOU DIDN'T, SO STICK THAT UP YA BOT. I MUST SAY, ALEX AND ANDY'S ENGLISH IS A RUDDY SIGHT BETTER THAN MY ITALIAN.*
  ALL I CAN SAY IS TORTELLONI, VALPOLICELLA, PASTA AND MUSSOLINi, WELL I S'POSE IT'S A START.
- *WAYNE SAYS: HURUMPH! I'M EVER SO SLIGHTLY PEEVED ABOUT THIS. I'M THE ONLY GUY FOR AL AND I SHAN'T HAVE ALL YOU OTHER GIGOLOS TRYING TO WIN HER HAND, SHE'S MINE (NO I'M NOT PIZZA FACE - AL)*

BEAR WITH ME A MO

Dear Wayne, I was recently playing that cool game on Megatape 9, Bear a Grudge when I found something very interesting. If you load in the header then press stop on the tape and press BREAK to break into it you will see the program. If you change the RANDOMIZE USR 32459 to RANDOMIZE USR 32500 and run it and load in the game you will have infinite lives. The sound will be duff but who cares!

Simon Odey E. Lothian, Scotland P.S. Your mag is the best

- *WAYNE SAYS: BEAR A GRUDGE REALLY IS A SUPER GAME ISN'T IT?*
  UNFORTUNATELY IT WAS A LITTLE BEFORE MY TIME SO I DON'T FEATURE IN IT (THAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT IT UG CHOPS - THE WHOLE SU TEAM). THANK YOU FOR YOUR WEE TIP. IF OTHER SU READERS HAVE TIPS, WRITE IN AND LET ME KNOW AND WE'LL PRINT THEM ON THIS PAGE.

I WANT SCHOOL DAZE

Dear Wayne, Please, please, please could you help? I have fallen in love with a game called School Daze. I have played the game before and liked it so much. I said to myself, ' shall have to buy it!' I've looked in every shop but I still haven't found it. Please help me Wayne.

Paul Mackay Worcester P.S. you're not as bad as they say you are!

- *WAYNE SAYS: I'M SORRY TO TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN NO LONGER BUY THIS GAME IN THE SHOPS. MAYBE IF SOMEONE OUT THERE HAS SCHOOL DAZE THEY COULD WRITE TO PAUL AT 36 BRITANIA SQUARE, WORCESTER WR1 3DH.*

WHO WANTS MY PAPER?

Dear Su, I have got 10 rolls of thermal printing paper for the ZX printer and as I have no further use for it, I'd like to sell it. Any offers? If so write to:

John Bradford, 20 Holcote Close, Belvedere, Kent DA17 5RR

ODE TO WAYNE SMEDLEY

There's a boy that I know called Wayne With acne all over his face He's a handsome young man all the same Compared with the blob from space

Now you may think that is unfair To call Wayne ugly but you see He's the boy with radio-active hair And all the finesse of a flea

His nose is all twisted and bent His mouth is exactly the same With nostrils like giant air vents 'Oh mummy' is his favourite game

As a writer he's really naff The fame has just gone to his head His replies are good for a laugh You should put me in charge instead

He plays with his plane As though no one cares His favourite clothes Are bright purple flares



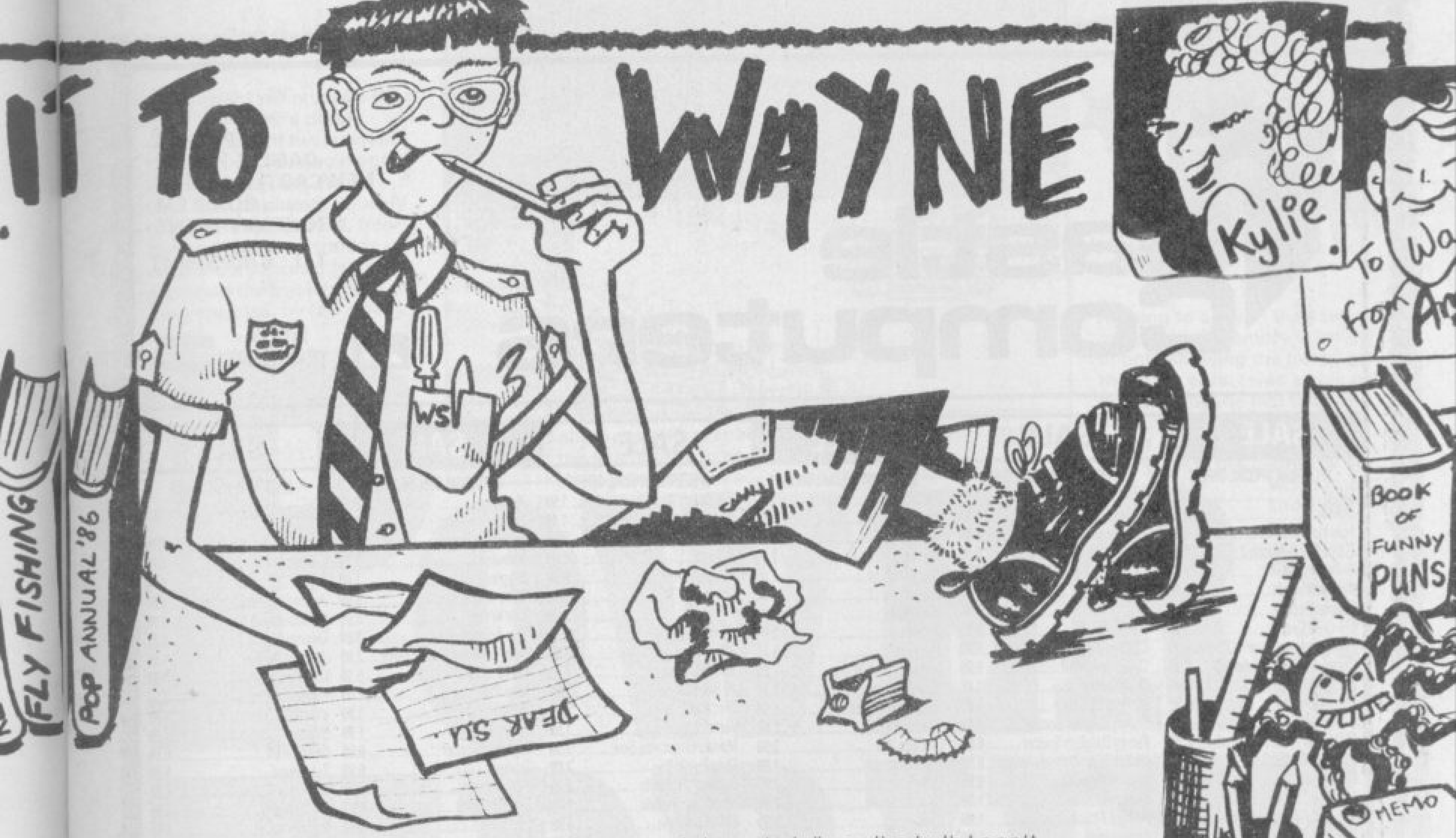
But Wayne's my best friend And you won't find one better Wayne you're the best And now print this letter (or I'll tell everyone about your teddy collection)

David Chater Warley, W. Midlands P.S. Is there a game of the film "The Blues Brothers", if not, why not?

- *WAYNE SAYS: WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT MY TEDDIES? YOU MUST PROMISE TO NEVER EVER MENTION THEM AGAIN - IT'S NOT VERY GOOD FOR MY IMAGE (YOU HAVEN'T GOT AN IMAGE, YOU GONK - AL). ACTUALLY IT WOULD BE A JOLLY GOOD IDEA TO SEE A BLUES BROTHERS GAME - IF ANY OF THE BIG SOFTWARE HOUSES ARE READING, GET TO IT AND QUICk.*

PRINT MY LETTER

Dear Wayne, If you print this letter I will seriously consider you a radicool dude! If you watch 'Inter-



ceptor', can you ask a software company why the hell they ain't doing it on computer?

It's so wicked that I'm going to try and do it (although I can only fiddle with character cell graphics). I got the Batman demo and loaded it and...no music. I played it and found myself stuck on a ledge with no way to get across. I loaded it on 128K and solved two problems. 1) You can throw the batarang diagonally 2) You get music

Jason White Basildon, Essex

- *WAYNE SAYS: THERE YOU GO ALL YOU CHAPPIES AT THE SOFTWARE HOUSES, MORE IDEAS FOR NEW GAMES. IF ANY SU READERS CAN THINK OF NEW IDEAS FOR GAMES, WRITE IN AND TELL ME ABOUT THEM.*

WAYNE'S NEW IMAGE

Dear Smelly (oops, sorry, Smedley), I am sick and tired of people picking on you, and I bet you are too. So why don't you do something about it.

For a start you can take them posters down - how's about putting some Alison Skeat posters up (yeah!). Get rid of them books on your desk, pile a few SU's up instead. I think that will make it a lot better. Do yer hair, blitz those zits, change those socks, take off that tie, just tidy up. Right thats out of the way now, good.

I've been reading SU for nearly a year now (no not the same one, I get a different one every month) and the first issue I got, well I can tell you now matey, I was hooked.



The Reviews are top class (except Dillon's), the Previews are great, the compos are mega, the posters are fabbo, and what can I say about the Megatapes.. to tell you the truth I can't think of a word good enough to describe 'em. And all of this is only £1.60.

THE MAG IS A MEGA MAG!!! Oh yes, can I put down my top ten games in my collection. (*Oh go one then - everyone at SU*).

1 New Zealand Story
2 Forgotten Worlds
3 Robocop
4 Renegade III
5 Emlyn Hughes Soccer
6 Microprose Soccer
7 Batman - Caped Crusader
8 Thunderblade
9 Dragon Ninja
10 Bionic Commandos

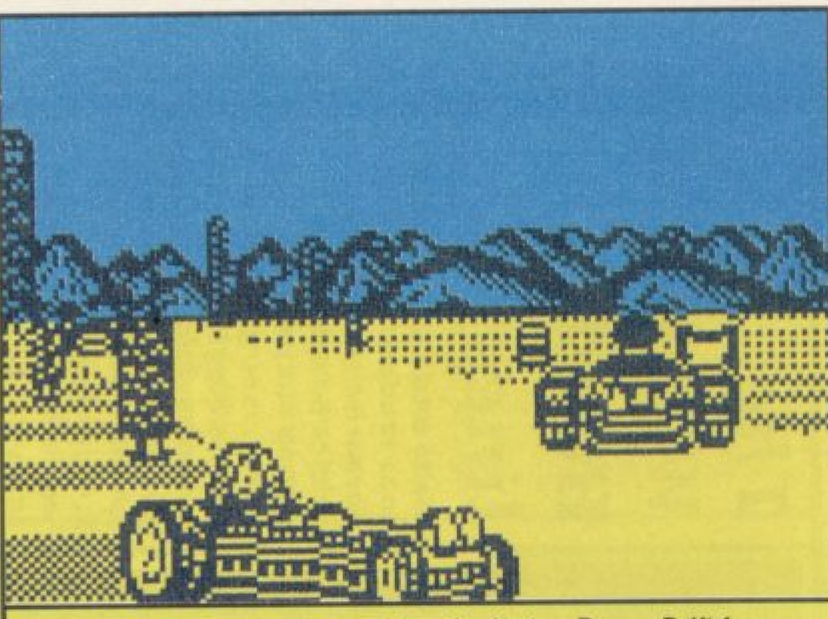
I'd also like to say hello to a few people - HELLO Mum, Dad, Bro's, class SC4B AND ALISON SKEAT (witty woo!). Oh yeah Wayne, what football team do you support, and what about Jim? Me? Well actually, to tell you the truth I'm a Misterton United fanatic (stop laughing you lot - Jim).

Neil Stocks Misterton, Doncaster

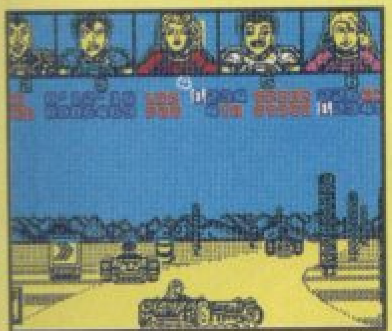
- *WAYNE SAYS: WELL NEIL AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE LOVELY PICCY I HAVE INDEED CHANGED MY IMAGE AND I AM NOW MEL GIBSON AND I GO ROUND SHOOTING BADDIES AND SNOGGING PATSY KENSIT (I'd rather snog baddies and shoot Patsy - Garthy). DEEP DOWN I'M STILL A SENSITIVE CHAP (he means ruddy great pansie - Al).*
- *JIM SAYS: I SUPPORT SOUTHEND UNITED ACTUALLY, BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE I LIVE. WAYNE SAYS THAT IF I SUPPORT SOUTHEND UNITED THEN HE DOES TOO - WORRA CRETIN!*
- *AL SAYS: HELLO BACK TO YOU NEIL, HOPE YOU'RE FEELING FINE.*
- *GARTH SAYS: WELL THERE I WAS, ACTUALLY TRYING TO DECIDE WHO WAS THE BEST ACTOR OUT OF MEL GIBSON AND DAFFY DUCK AND DECIDED THAT AL WOULD BE BETTER THAN BOTH AS SHE'S ALREADY SUPER- STAR!*

POWER DRIFT

Power Drift must be the boy racer's dream game. All the elements that your XR3 driving mega-lad could possibly desire have been captured; squeely tyres, ultra high speed, treacherous roads, no traffic cops and a simple mission - get round the track before everyone else, by fair means or foul.



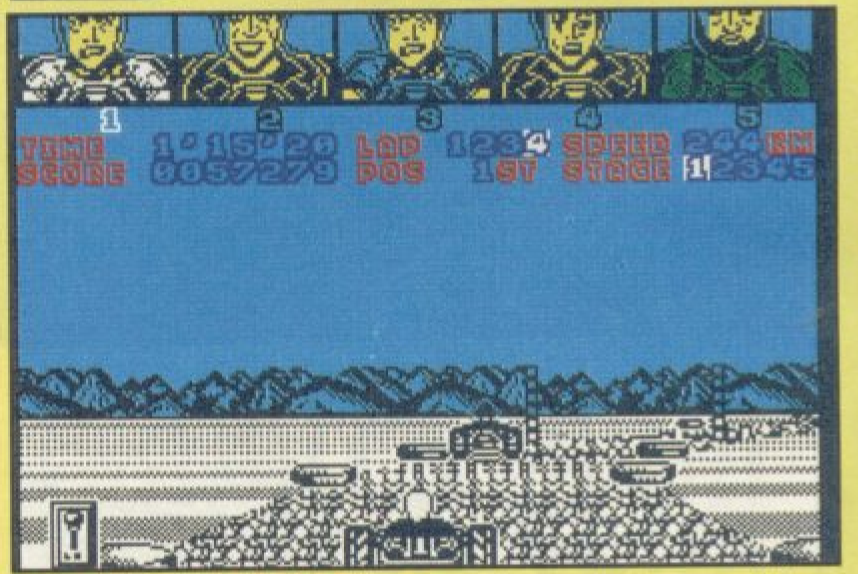
Occasionally wonky 3D graphics don't stop Power Drift from crossing the line in time to qualify.!



Power Drift is viewed by many as the ultimate arcade driving experience. You win more through bottle than driving expertise.

It's a simple fact of life that the graphics are a poor imitation of the coin op. But that's fine. It's the impression of the game that matters. And it's just about there.

The control of the car is simple. Left, right, gas, brake, change gear (hi or low). At the start of each race you can cycle through a selection of drivers (which determine which car you'll have) and then decide on which course you want to race.



The terrain changes wildly from course to course. One moment you'll be swooshing over sand dunes and loose gravel, and the next you'll be smashing your shock absorbers on bone-shaking rock formations.

Different road surfaces require different styles of driving. You'll have to turn in much earlier on a loose surface to avoid sliding out of control.

A point which I found disturbing is that the other drivers on the course never, ever, slide off the track or even drift at all. I'm sure this is nothing to do with the saving on graphics memory involved in only showing the backs of the other cars. I was also a bit bothered by the fact that your wheels don't turn round either.

Everyone in the history of the world must know by now that achieving a three-dimensional effect with some degree of speed is virtually impossible on a home machine.

Obviously, you end up allowing for the sacrifices made by the programmers in order to give a fast game with ropey graphics or a fab looking game that's none too fast. Power Drift strikes a medium that is far from perfect but about as good as anyone could reasonably expect.

There are some definitely wonky pieces of coding. On the elevated sections, why do the huge rocks at the side of the road hang, unsupported, in the air? Why can you drive through the tyres of the other cars some times, but get bumped off after a tiny knock at others?

Although I found myself infuriated by these niggles, it has to be said that I did go back and play the game time after time. It definitely has a great deal of finely honed playability. Yes, sometimes it is very hard to see what's going on on the screeen, but you're still determined to get that "third or better" position to get through to the next change.

So, *Power Drift* wins in the end. It's playability wins through over some dodgy features. A triumph over adversity.

ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

Ultimate driving game makes the transition, just.

Label: **Activision** *Author:* **In house** *Price:* **£8.95**
Memory: **48K/128K** *Joystick:* **Various**

Reviewer: [signature]

GRAPHICS	SOUND	PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY	OVERALL
65	65	80	79	79

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

SUNEWS



The Big Secrets Are Out!

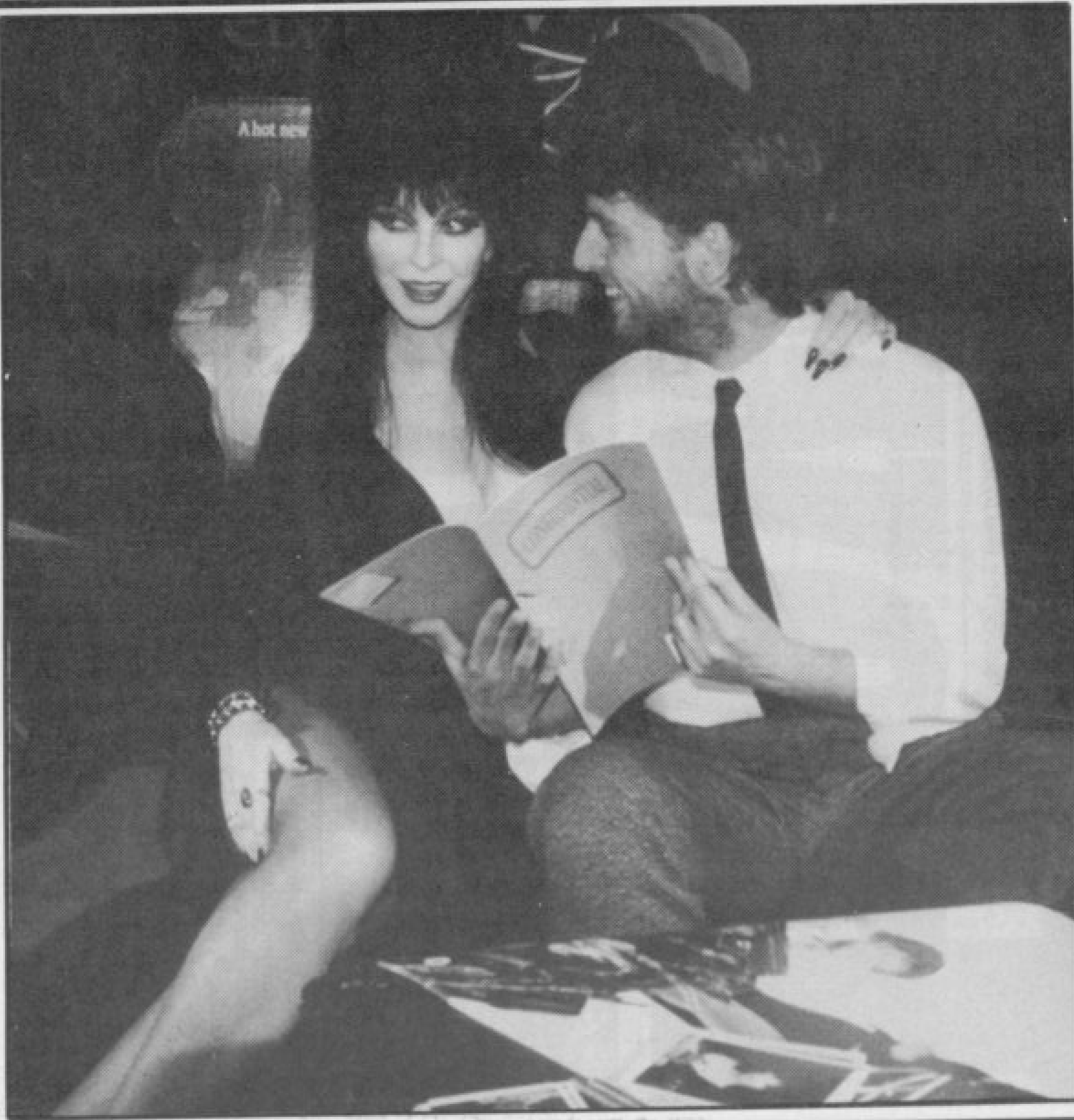
by our "massive assets" correspondent

Two enormous pieces of news from adventure specialists Official Secrets, and only one of them is to do with the divine Elvira, Mistress of the Dark.

At the press launch for the vivacious vamp's video and adventure game, Official Secrets' John Trevillian enjoyed a few moments of intimacy on Elvira's cobwebbed chaise-longue. Elvira was said to be impressed by Official Secrets' Horror Special, issue 8 of the adventure magazine Confidential, while Trevillian was impressed by Elvira's plunging neckline.

That other software seductress, Anita Sinclair of Magnetic Scrolls, also has a bit of exciting news for adventurers; Official Secrets is to produce the long-awaited complete solution books for all the Magnetic Scrolls adventures, including The Pawn, Guild of Thieves, Jinxter, Corruption and Fish. Each book will offer maps and three levels of coded clues. Also on the way is a solution book for Exxos' Captain Blood.

For details of the Official Secrets magazine and the Special Reserve gamers club, contact John Trevillian on (0279) 726585.



The Wayne Head-lines

Hello and Merry Christmas readers! This is my favourite time of year - icicles hanging from happy old people's noses, merry homeless people begging for scraps outside the manor house, jolly orphans huddling around the gas-lamp for warmth, and big fat tax inspectors and estate agentss with grease running down their chins stuffing themselves with whole turkeys and oxen! Yes, Christmas is a time for giving, and I'm giving it two days before the whole business makes me throw up!

As you'll see if you turn to the centre pages, Xmas (or Chrimbo as we call it in Smedley Towers) is always a bit of a strain for the

bit of a strain for the whole family, but it must be even ... cult ...

SAM on the way for Xmas

Horror Shock

by our "jingle bells, jingle bells" correspondent

The Spectrum-compatible SAM Coupe looks on time for a Christmas launch, and manufacturers MGT are crowing over positive reactions from games software houses. A spokesperson announced that US Gold would be producing a SAM version of Strider, System 3 converting Myth - History in the Making, and the Oliver twins writing a SAM version of Dizzy 3 for Codemasters.

All the manufacturing contracts have now been signed, and the components for the SAM Coupe will be produced by various electronics and engineering companies in England and Wales. Initial production targets are 2000 units a week, going up to 20,000, and computers should be in the shops by December. MGT will be selling SAM through independent retailers rather than High Street multiples, because they believe it's best to go for outlets with specialist knowledge of computers.

Now that the IBM PC-based Programmers' Development System has been made compatible with the SAM, MGT reckon that it should only take a week for any game written for a Z-80-based machine such as the Amstrad CPC to be converted to the SAM, using David Whittaker's music utility and Bo Jangeborg's graphics routines.

Although nine major computer games software houses have signed agreements to write SAM games, the initial SAM package will be sold without any games, though it will include the Flash graphics package and some demo programs.

Prices for the system have been confirmed as £169.95 for the basic computer; £89.95 for the disc drive; £249.90 for the two together; £39.95 for a 256K ROM pack; £19.95 for an interface for the Plus D disc drive; £29.95 for a parallel/RS/232 communications interface, and various leads and connectors from £4.95 to £9.95.

For more details, contact MGT on 0792 791100.

Amstrad Dosh Plunge Shock!

by our "oh dear what a pity" correspondent

Amstrad's financial results for the period ending June 30th 1989 contained some nasty shocks - profits were only half of last year's, down from £160m to £76m. It was the first time annual profits had gone down since Amstrad became a public company.

Sales were static at £626m, and Amstrad's share prices dropped below 50p - a quarter of their price a year ago.

Amstrad blame the poor results on increased prices for RAM chips, technical problems with PCs, a poor investment in a chip manufacturing company, competition in the audio market and anything else they can think of.

Poor old Alan Sugar is left being worth only around £26m, so if you'd like to lend him a few bob, send it to the Save Lord Sugar Fund, c/o Jim's Bank Account, Sinclair User.



NEWSFLASH... NEWSFLASH.... NEWSFLASH

High Speed Loads for the Spectrum!

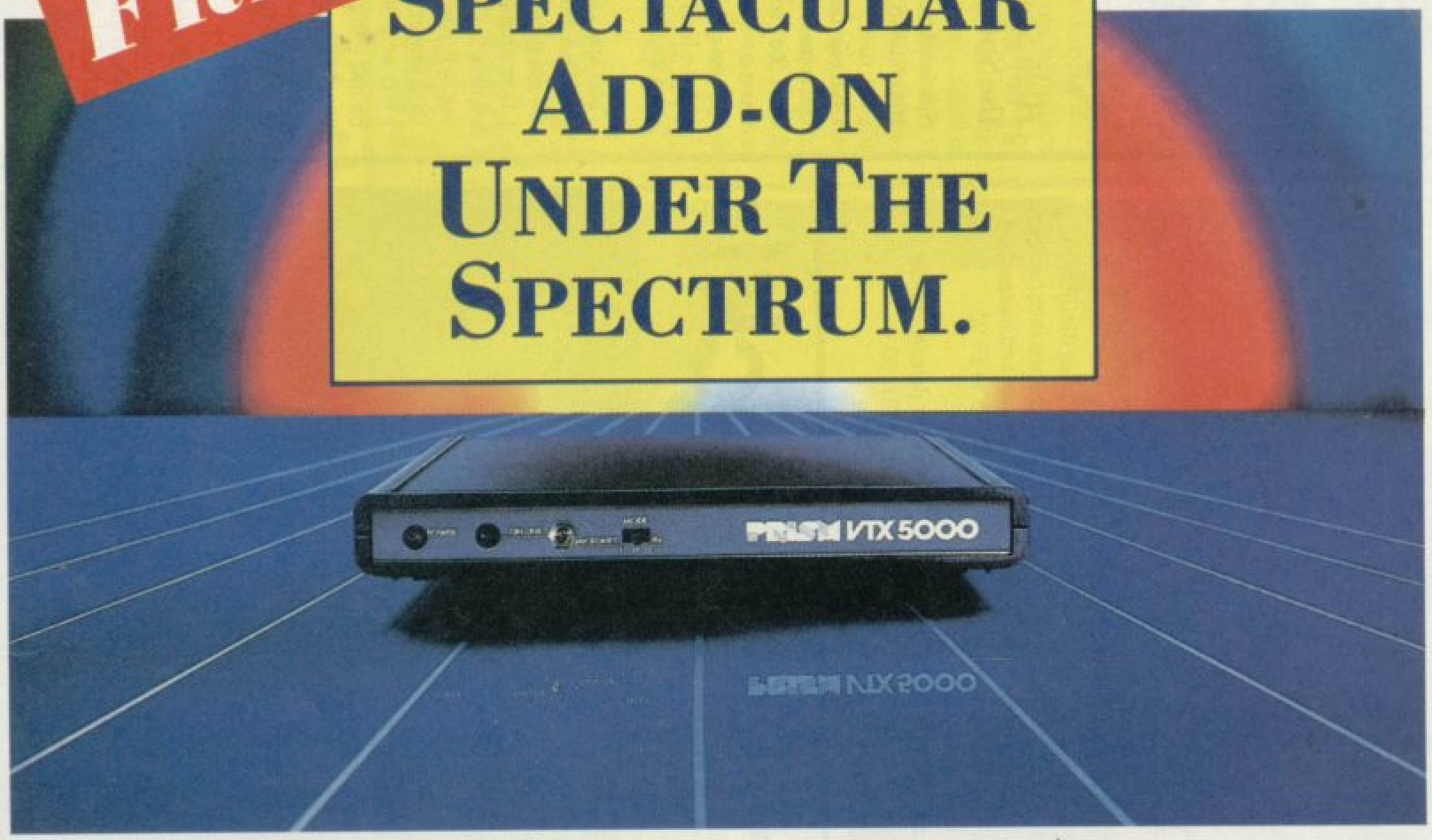
Sinclair User - The first with the BIG NEWS for the Spectrum

Codemasters have announced the release of a brand new product that will mean that Spectrum owners who do not have the benefit of disk drive will be able to load their games in less than 20 seconds.

Their specially developed Compact Disc Games Pack utilizes the speed and accuracy of the CD in order to give all spectrum owners the benefit of fast loading. All you need is a Compact Disc player as the pack includes a CD with 30 of their best games on and a high quality lead that simply plugs into the CD and the ear port of any spectum giving blisteringly fast loading times.

The CD games pack will retail at 19.95 and will give instant game selection due to the track selection facility of all CD players and the disk will hold almost 2 megabytes of game.

FREE THE MOST SPECTACULAR ADD-ON UNDER THE SPECTRUM.

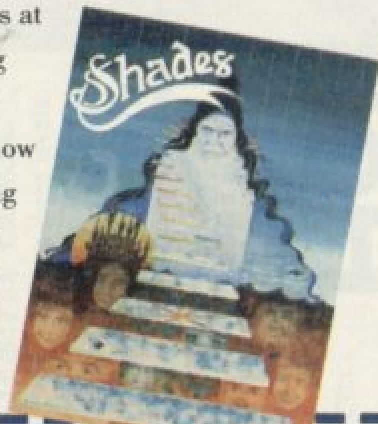


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OFF OFF OFF, it's all coming off. What an amaz·ing offer we have for you this month and on this very page too, pheweee. Yes indeedy, an offer type bonanza if ever there was.

What are we prattling on about? We'll tell you shall we (I wish you bloody well would - all SU readers in the Bradford area). Cash, dosh, wonga that's what. We've managed to wangle a 'wowee omigosh I don't believe it' amount of 50p off the price of a ticket to the fantabulous Computer Shopper Show. Just for you, so we hope you ruddy well appreciate it.

How can I take advantage of this once in a lifetime, never to be repeated offer I hear you cry (ok then, whisper)? Well, all you have to do is cut out the coupon below take it along to The Computer Shopper Show and thrust it under the nose of the man on the door and he'll let you through on the cheap. Prices for admission are £4 for adults, £3 for children and £14 for a family group of two adults and two children. The show runs from November 24th to the 26th at Alexandra Palace (nearest station is Alexandra Palace, surprise surprise) and there'll be plenty of soft and hardware goodies for you to ogle at so we suggest you hot foot it down there and see for yourself.

COMPUTER SHOPPER SHOW

50p OFF

This voucher is worth 50p per person off the price of admission to the Computer Shopper Show 1989. It is, alternatively, worth £4 off a family ticket

Only one discount per person is allowable
Photocopies are not valid

Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, London N22
10am-5pm Friday, November 24th 10am-6pm Saturday, November 25th
10am-4pm Sunday, November 26th

AVON

Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious Summer by this son of York! To be or not to be, that is the question! Er... get your bananas out, Mercutio. These and many other Shakespearian quotations (except the last one, which I made up, no honest) are to be found in Avon, an adventure set in a dream-like Shakespearian world and written by Topologika's hot-shot Jonathan Partington, author of Kingdom of Hamil.

This disc-based text-only adventure casts you as an American traveller doing the tourist thing in Stratford-upon-Avon, home of the Bard himself. Making the mistake of annoying three sinister old ladies in an antique shop, then drinking a strange potion to ward off a headache, you find yourself in a world made up of one part Verona and one part blasted heath (who?). Your aim is simply to get back to the real world.

You don't have to know much about Shakespeare to play the game, because although the situations come from the Bard of Avon's well-known plays, the solutions are the usual adventure stuff; get newt's eye, put in cauldron, pick up torch, and like that. To some extent this makes the whole thing pointless; it's just a series of Shakespearian references splodged together, without actually testing your knowledge or appreciation of the works; a bit like someone reeling off lots of jokes but forgetting the punchlines.



```
Stage                              10

So there you are, standing in a world that,
although it is definitely NOT
Stratford-upon-Avon, does seem to have this
strange Shakespearean flavour. To judge by those
fragments of Shakespeare's works that you can
remember, it all looks very much as though you
may have been transported into the world of his
plays, but it will be your wits rather than your
knowledge that will help you now.

Whoever it was that got you into this nightmare,
it is now up to you to find your way back to the
present day. Good luck!


You are standing on a flat plain. From here it
seems that all the world's a stage, and all the
men and women merely players: they have their
exits and their entrances to the north, south,
east and west.
:
```

"Once more unto the breech dear friends.." And so you begin Avon and start a journey littered with Shakespearean prose.

```
Stage                              10
You are standing on a flat plain. From here it
seems that all the world's a stage, and all the
men and women merely players: they have their
exits and their entrances to the north, south,
east and west.
:n

You are on a wild heath. So foul and fair a day
you have not seen. A path leads off to the south,
there is a forest path to the northwest, and a
chilly wind blows down a path to the northeast.
What are these so wither'd and wild in their
attire? They should be women but their beards
forbid thee to interpret that they are so.
The witches are prepared to give you one of the
following objects:
An eye of newt
A toe of frog
A wool of bat
A tongue of dog
Which object will you take?
?
```

"Where shall we three met again?" If you pick up the right item EYE think things could get easier!

The screen display consists of nothing but text and a short description of your location and score. The parser is quite powerful, allowing chaining of commands, and you can choose terse, normal or long scene descriptions. There's a Help routine which prompts you to type in requests for hints listed on a sheet, and you get a postcard of Stratford with the package!

There's also a free bonus adventure, Monsters of Murdac, on the other side of the disk. This too is a text-only adventure, but in a more conventional pixies-and-princesses vein, involving a bold adventurer exploring a mysterious world of cannibals, ogres, witches and sorcery.



Although it's a pleasure to find adventure games which aren't full of spelling mistakes, Avon is a bit of a let-down for a Shakespearian scholar such as myself (hem-hem modesty modesty) and Murdac is merely average adventure fair. Reasonable VFM, though.

ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

Text only adventure that may help with your Shakespeare.

GRAPHICS	SOUND
N/A	N/A
69	79
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

AVON Label: Toplogica
Author: Dr. J. Partington
Price: 14.95 Memory: 128K
disc only ***Joystick:*** *None*

Reviewer:

OVERALL 72

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

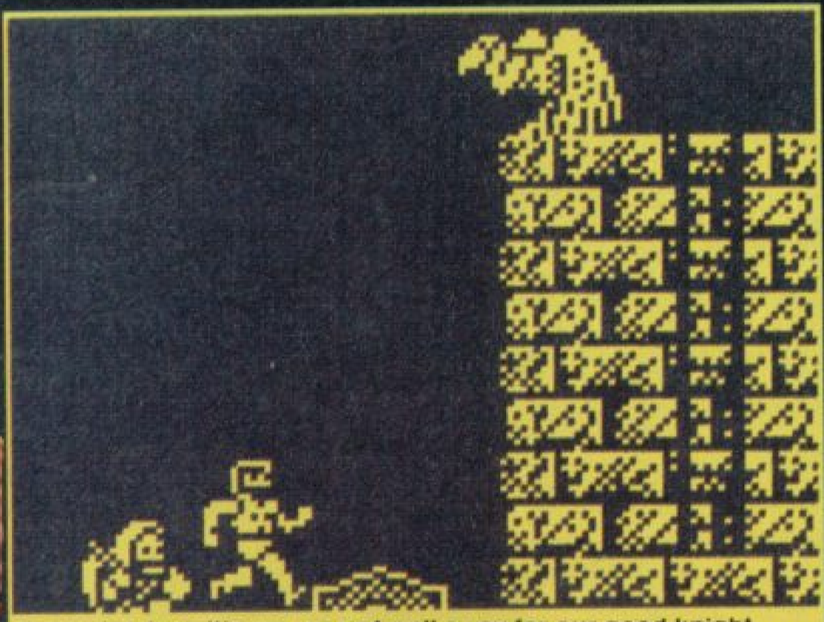


Hard Drivin'
A TRUE THREE-DIMENSIONAL WORLD PRESENTED ON THE SCREEN!
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Hard Drivin', available for your home computer, is not just the best game on offer – it's a whole new driving experience.
Take Hard Drivin' for a test drive today!
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Programmed by Jurgen Friedrich 16 bit Binary Design 8 bit
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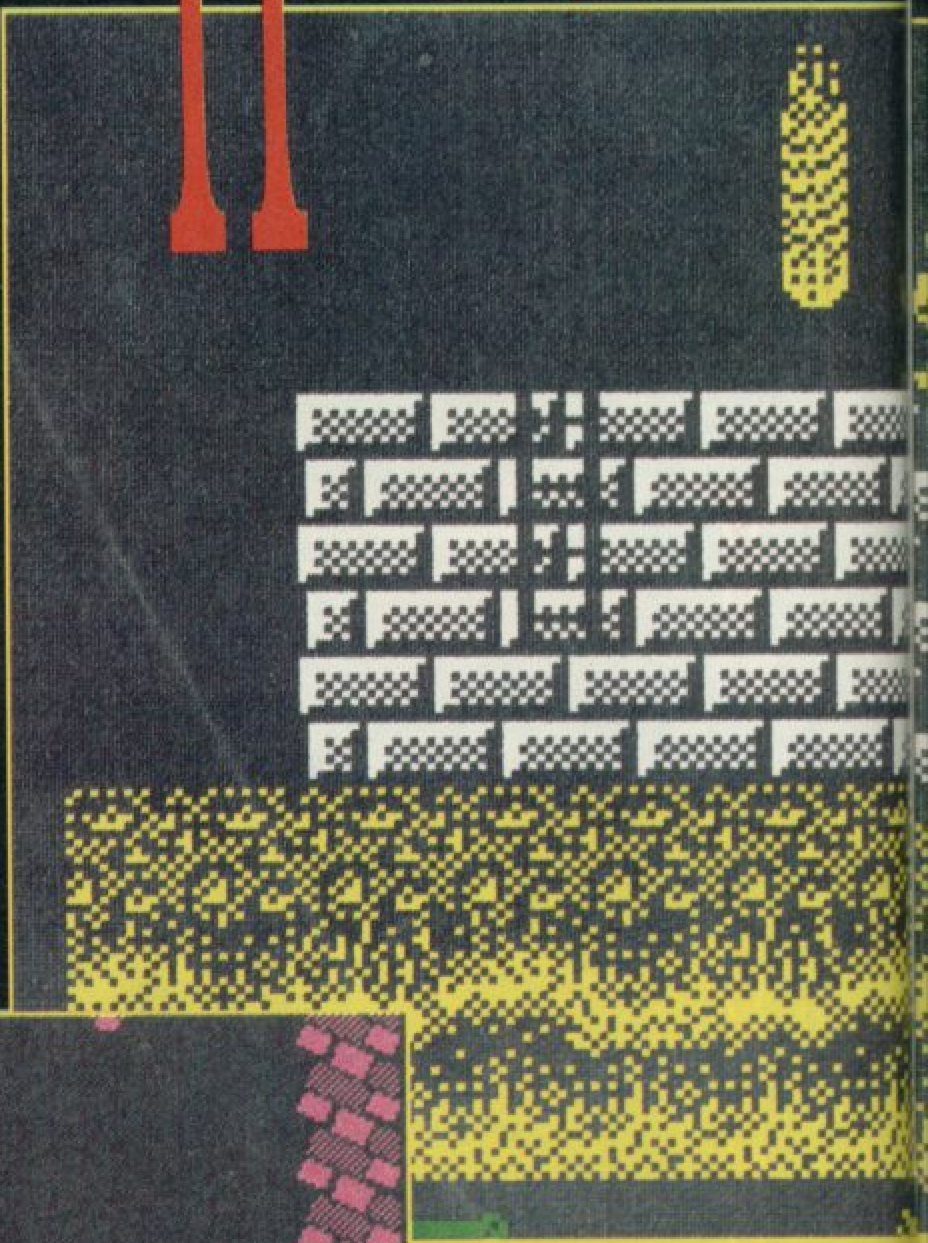
GHOULS

Hell is a lonely place. The tormented screams of lost, dark souls echo in the void where hope is but a faded memory and pain is the currency in which all debts are paid. The Horned One, warped in his power and alone in his misery, waits only for the day of reckoning when the dead shall rise and the final judgement will be theirs.





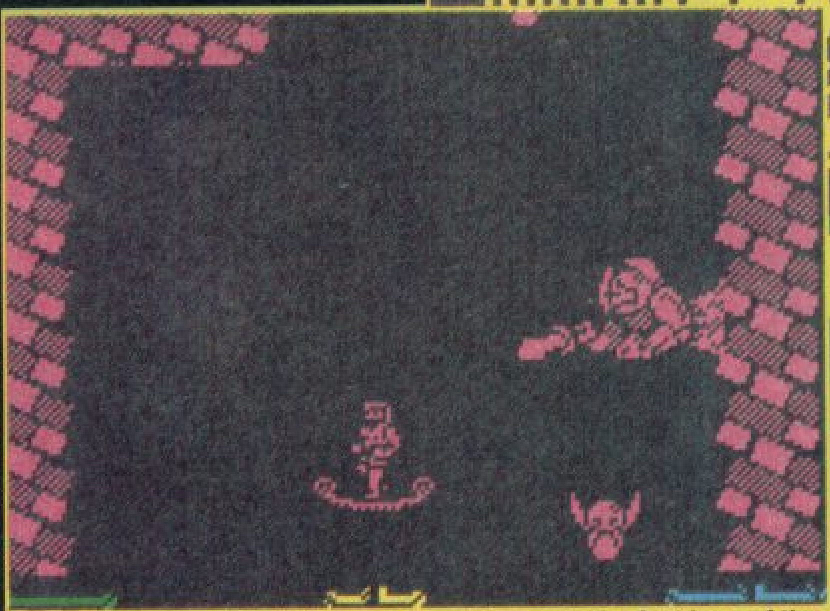
A running leap it's up, up and well away for our good knight. Let's hope the vulture doesn't stick his beak in.



And what has all this to do with Ghouls N' Ghosts. Well not a lot except that we should try to set the scene, for what is a thoroughly evil program with some wicked and well tasty programming.
For the sake of accuracy, for all you arcade freaksters out there, Ghouls N' Ghosts is US



Gold's conversion of the Capcom arcade classic of the same name, (which in effect is Ghosts N' Goblins II). In it, you must fight your way through five levels of nastiness in order to rescue the princess and live happily ever after in Surrey where you retire to write your memoires. Play begins with you suitably decked out in your designer Pierre Cardin metal vest, resplendent in your butchness and waving several feet of cold steel that should serve you well for any open head surgery that you might like to try on a passing zombie.
And here comes one now, pushing it's way out of the ground. "Are you a private or National Health zombie?"
"Grunt!" He must be National Health you think as you make your first (and last) incision straight throught he neck. There, that's cured his headache permanently.
To show their (un)dying gratitude, sometimes nasties will bequeth you another type of weapon. These vary in type and include water, an axe,

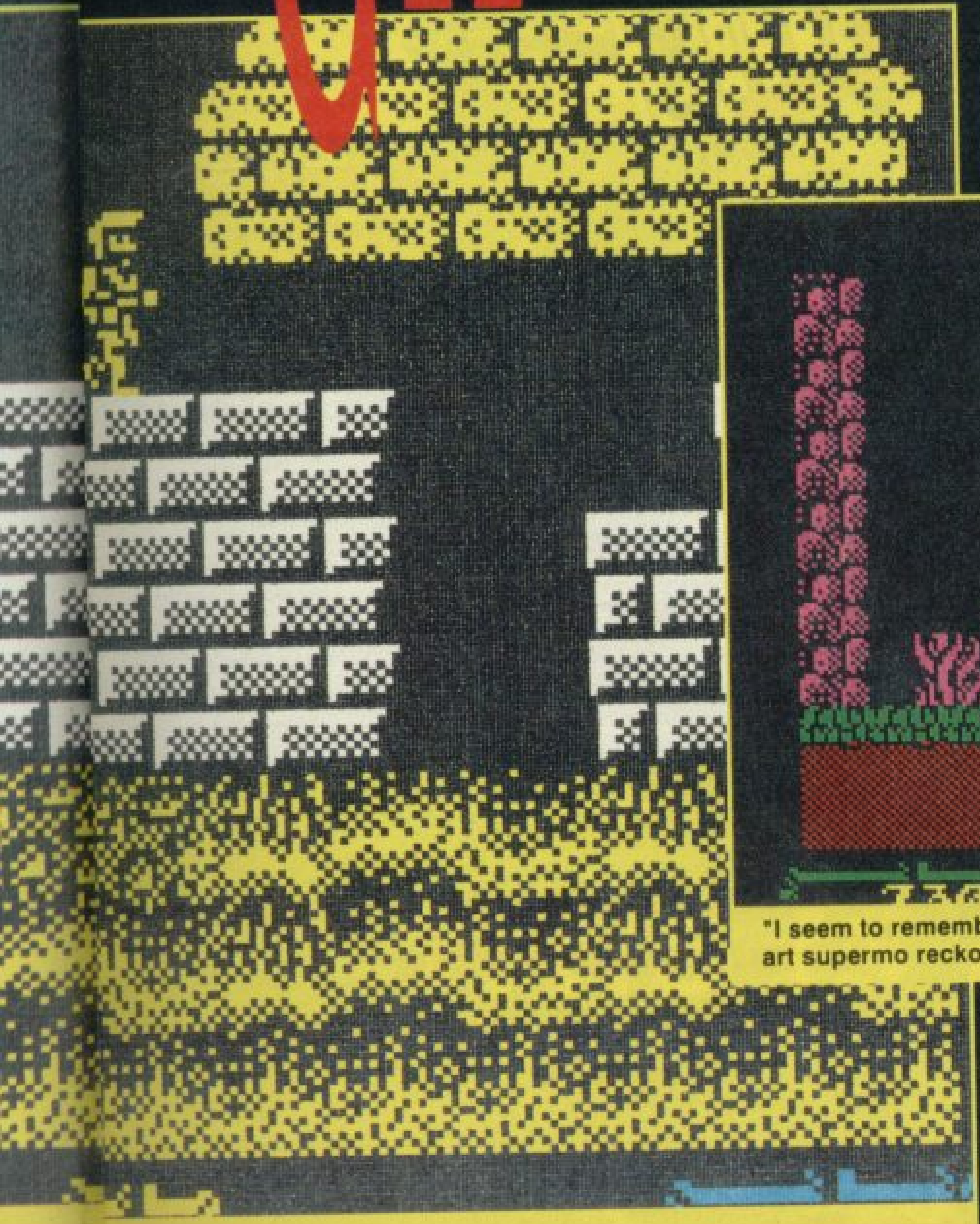


"Nice doggy, fetch!!" Lobbing something onto the fast lane of the M1 won't work. This mean mongrel of doom can take a lot of stick!

sheridans etc. Each has its own advantages and weaknesses and each one, when walked over is swopped with the current weapon in use.
Now and again, you may get hit. The first successful attack completely relieves our hero of his armour - but he will battle on clad only in his tinfoil vest and knickers. Needless to say, the next hit is "Goodnight, good knight!"

& GHOSTS

GAMES REVIEW!



There are some big chests (titter), which contain some goodies; replacement suits of armour and even super armour which when powered up, releases a devestating charge which will kill any nastie that gets in the way of it. Open them by attacking them with whatever weapon you have to hand but beware! Sometimes they hold a spell that, unless destroyed, will



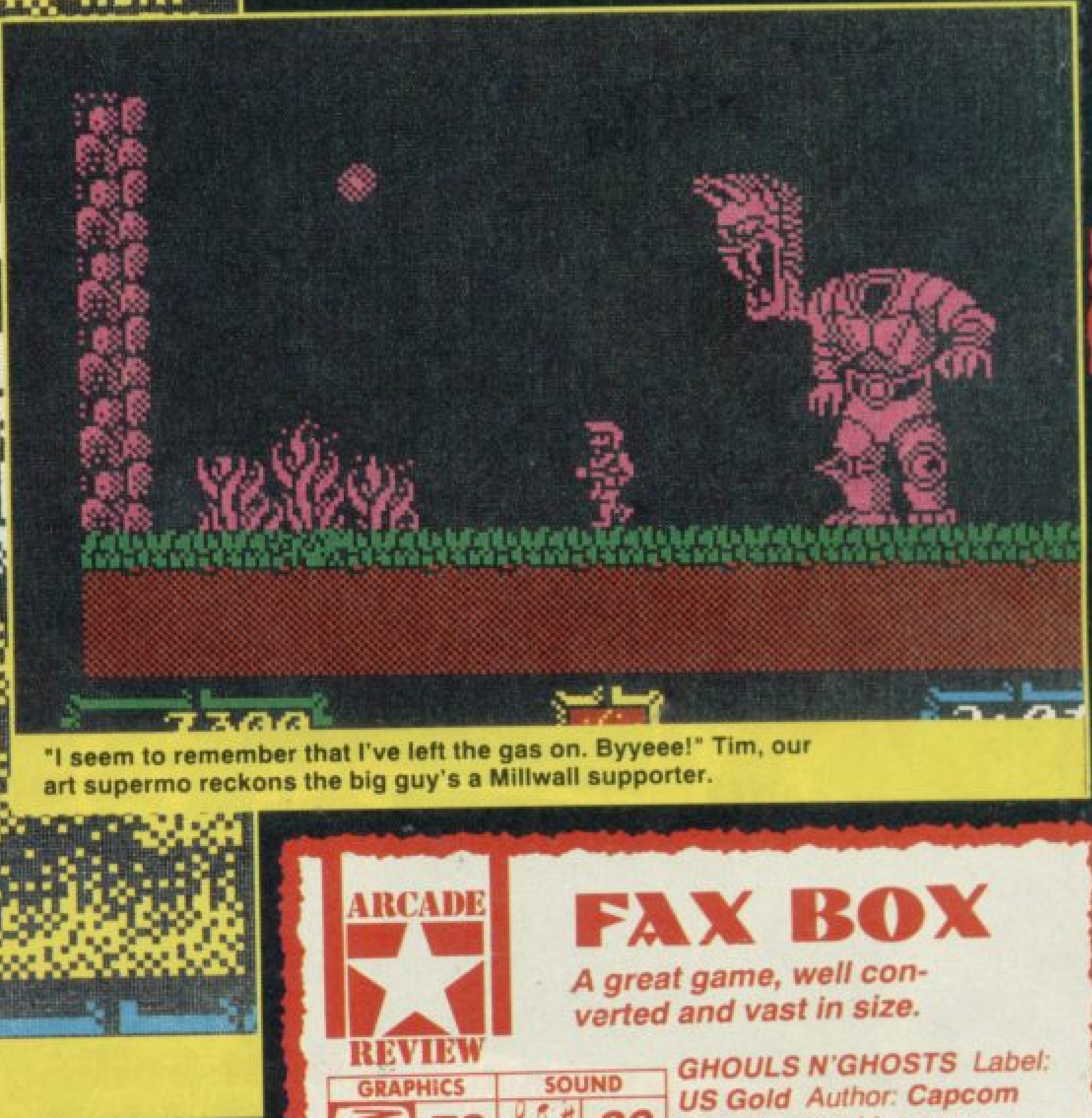


turn the hero into a duck (with NO weapon) or an old crumbly complete with walking stick and associated slowness.



There are 5 levels to Ghouls N' Ghosts and there's a hell of a lot in it. How'd they get so much in? I reckon they must've rammed it in with a large wooden pole.

The first stage of the game didn't strike me as wonderful with the small hero graphic sometimes getting lost with the yellow walls but on later levels this criticism disappears and the large scale monsters are very good, in both graphics and size with later levels showing some good uses of colour and making for what is a game that could be played for ages, by all ages.



"I seem to remember that I've left the gas on. Byyeee!" Tim, our art supermo reckons the big guy's a Millwall supporter.

ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

A great game, well converted and vast in size.

GRAPHICS	SOUND
78	80
82	88
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

GHOULS N'GHOSTS Label: US Gold Author: Capcom Price: £8.95 Memory: 48/128K Joystick: Various

Reviewer: Garth Sumpter

OVERALL 82

Nobody Does it Better...



Overall Best Selling title — 92,060

4 consecutive years at the top.

Best Spectrum title — 76,055

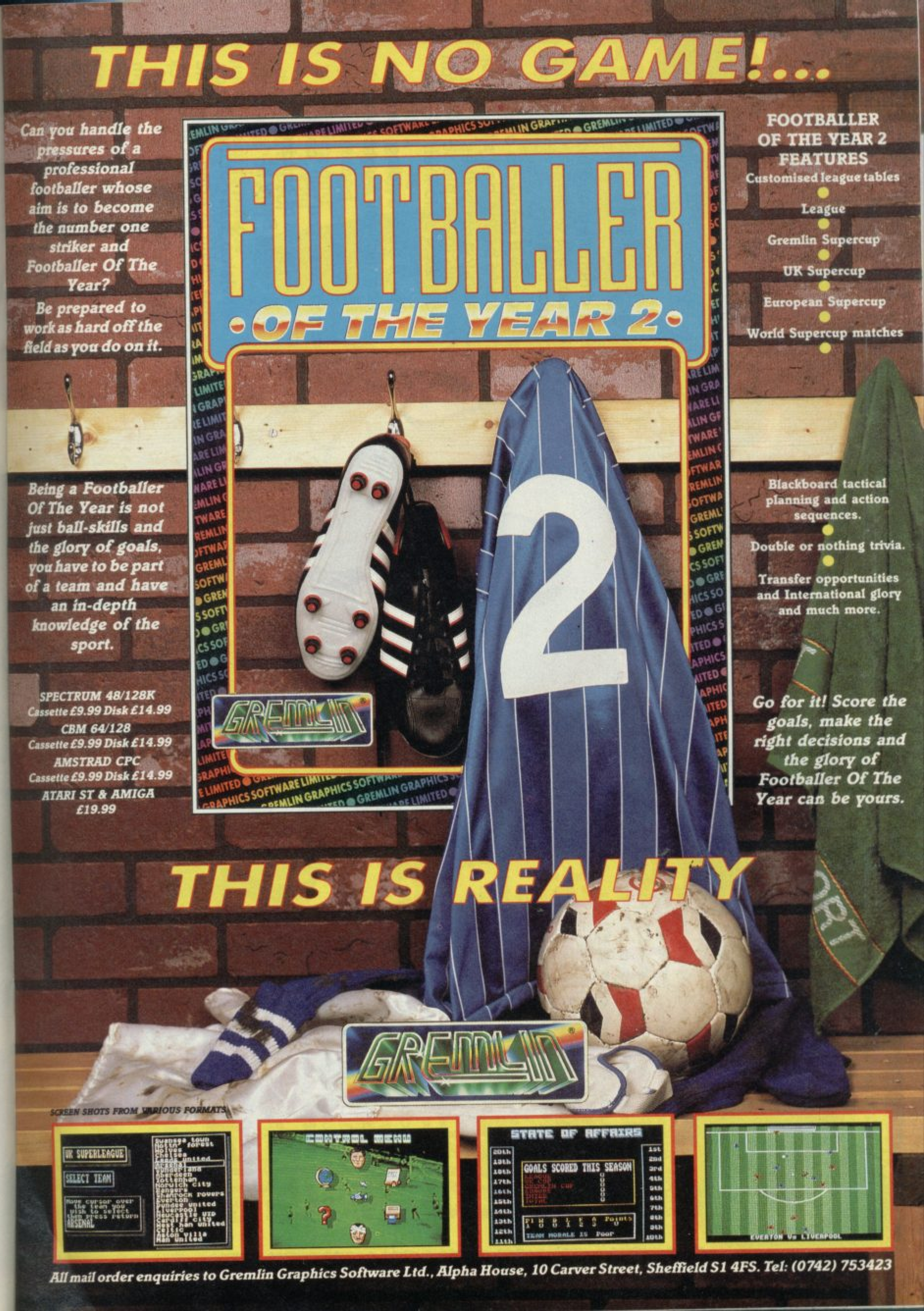
Best Selling Commodore title No.1 Amiga Mag. 66,211

Best Selling multi format 16-bit games title — 39,219

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CONTROL MENU
STATE OF AFFAIRS
GOALS SCORED THIS SEASON
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All mail order enquiries to Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: (0742) 753423

GHOSTBUSTERS

ACTIVSION COMPO BAGS OF GLOW-IN-THE-DARK T SHIRTS! FREE ODEON CINEMA TICKETS! GHOST BUSTERS II THE GAME!

Eeeeggggghhh!



There's a hundred and one uses for these fabby bits of cloth - you could even wear them!

Just imagine if you wore one in the cinema. You'd be the bee's knees for hard working usherettes as you lend your T shirt to people so they can find their way to their seats.

You'd be providing such a service that you ought to get in free.

And go in free you will 'cos the delightful and friend of children Amanda Barry at

Activision, has got the Odeon cinema chain to bring to you one of her ever-so-nearly exclusive offers which means you can have 2 free tickets to go to see any film showing at an Odeon cinema; so you can take your mum, take your mate or take a liberty and not go to watch a

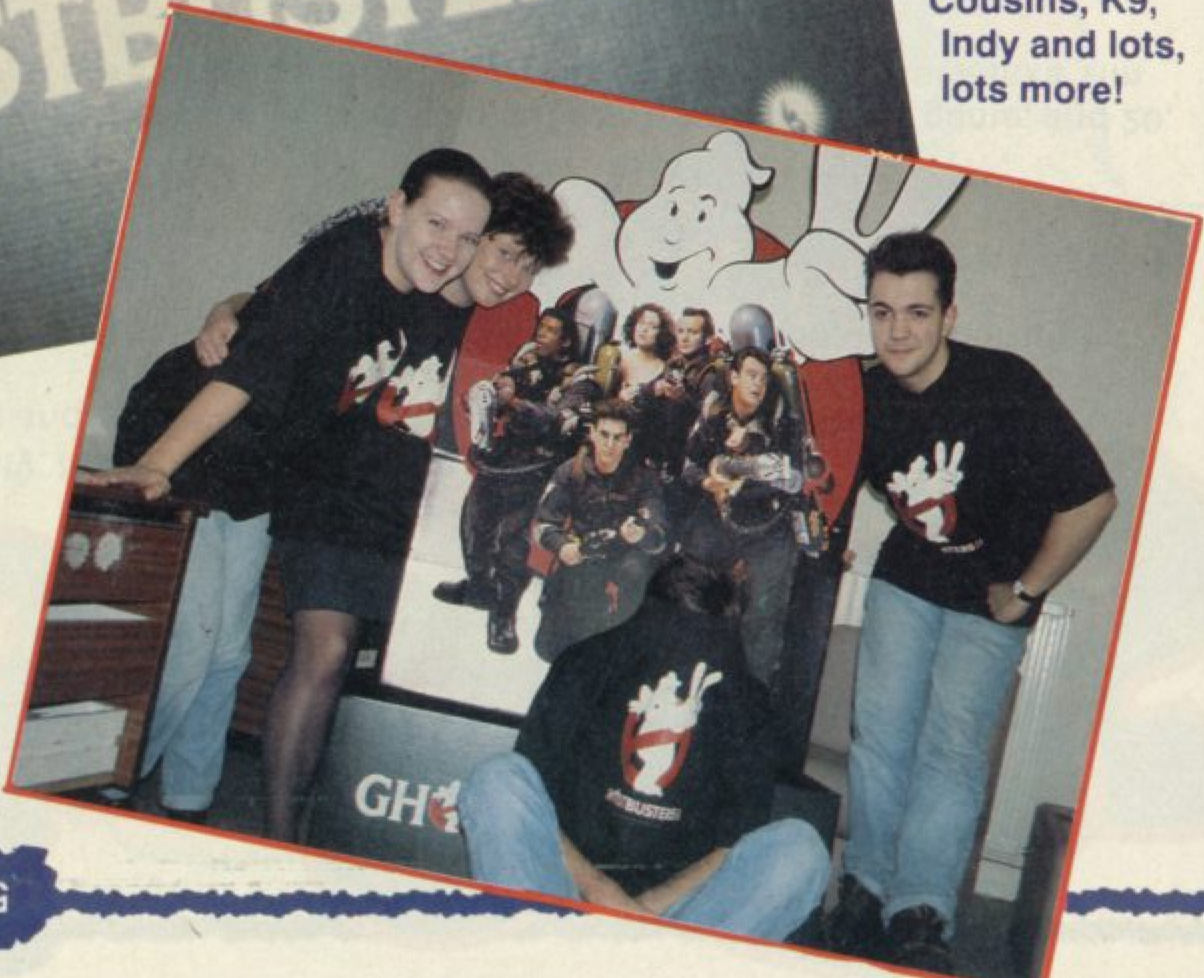
and not go to watch a film but to have a bit of a snog in the back seats. You could even go just to watch someone else snogging, but you'd be two cards short of a full deck not to watch one of the fabbo films around at the moment. I mean, there's loadsa fantastic flicks; Ghostbusters II, Batman, Lethal Weapon II, Dead Poets' Society, Star Trek V, Cousins, K9, Indy and lots, lots more!



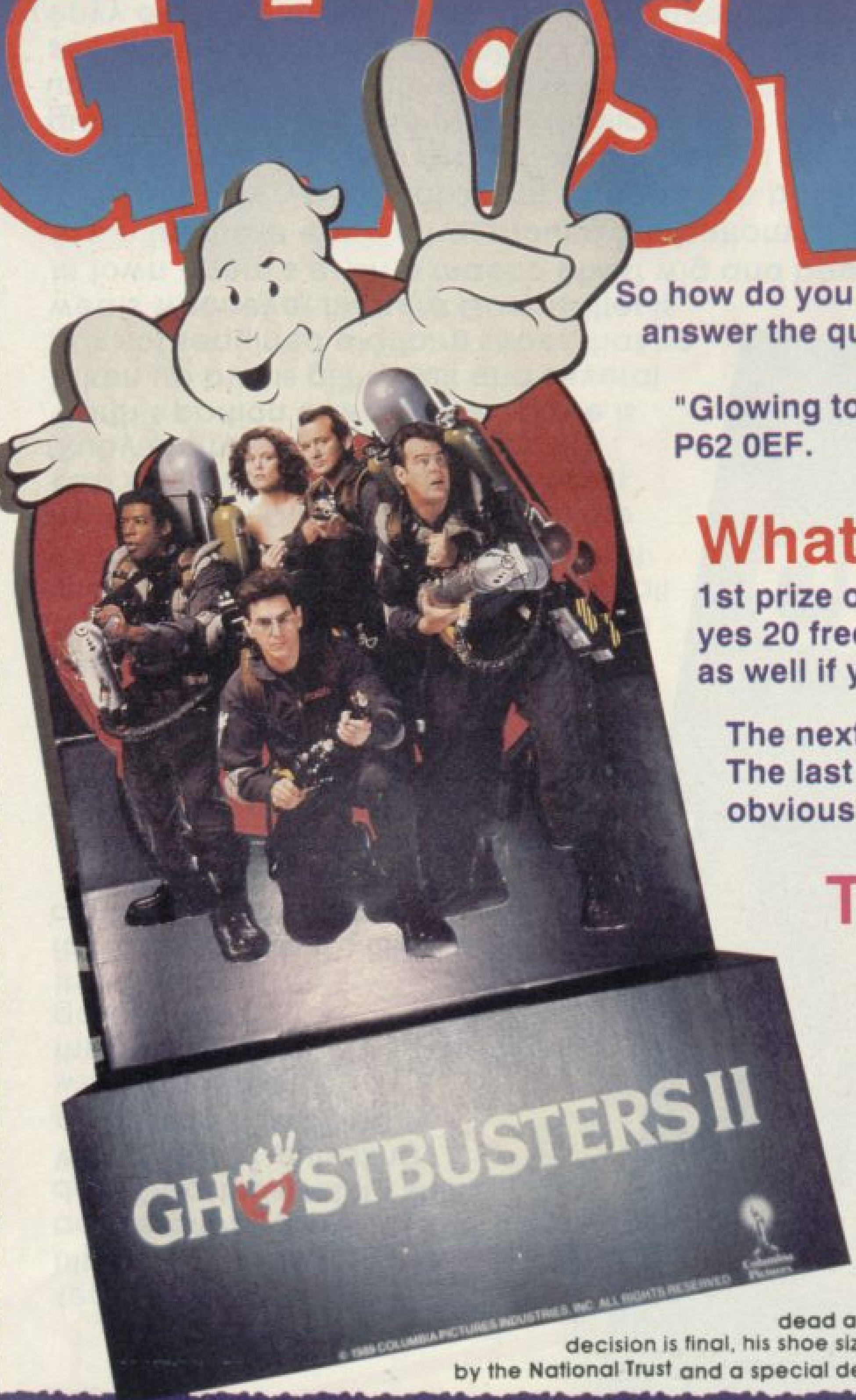
They're horrible! They're terrible! They're the ultimate in spooky accessories - glow-in-the-dark Ghostbusters II T shirts. We've got 51 pulsating away in the SU office wardrobe and they've got to go because there's no room left in it as it's filled with clothes from the team.

There's Jim's Gucci sock collection and his designer incontinence boxer shorts and his white tuxedo that he wears if Wendy from Transvision Vamp pops in (fawn, fawn). Just behind Al's dressless, evening strap and taffeta ball gown that she wears to the Hippodrome on grab-a-gargoyle night is Tim's football kit and his Arfur Daley sheepskin that he wears "fer a good night down the East end", complete with ruby stains. (Ruby Murray - Curry in Timspeak). Garth's portion of wardrobe space is taken up by his glitter suit and several pairs of sequined platform shoes that he wears whenever his hero Gary Glitter is in town. There's even a macho chest wig and bouffant wig that seem to chase each other around the bottom of the wardrobe.

So you see, we've got to get some space back and we thought that you, dear reader, would benefit greatly from our glowing T shirts. Yes, no more fumbling in the dark trying to get undressed for bed. With a Ghostbuster T shirt, you can always see what you're doing thanks to your luminescent chest. Be the envy of your friends, as you display a healthier glow than even the nightshift workers at Cellerfield. Be able to read your Sinclair User in bed after mum has confiscated your pocket torch.



GHOSTBUSTERS



So how do you get your sweaty, little paws on this bundle of goodies then? S'easy, just answer the questions below and send your entry off to

"Glowing to the Movies" Compo, Sinclair User, 14 Holkham Road, Orton, Peterborough, P62 0EF.

What's in for you?

1st prize of the Ghostbusters stand-up in the piccie, a T shirt, a copy of the game, and 20, yes 20 free Cannon cinema tickets to be used at any Cannon cinema. (You can take Tim as well if you want.)

The next 20 lucky little toadies will each receive 2 free cinema tickets and a T shirt. The last ten who are probably all stupid, will each receive a T shirt each - although they obviously don't deserve to win anything.

THE 'OH SO EASY' QUESTIONS

1) Spell GHOSTBUSTERS
2) Where does Alison go on grab-a-gargoyle night? *
3) What does she wear? *
4) Why?

* Read the text for an answer

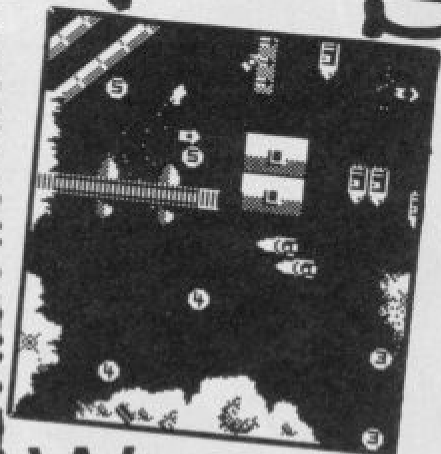
First Choice ODEON

Rules:

No employees of EMAP or Odeon are allowed to enter. Neither is anyone who; a) smells: b) owns a fur coat made from dead animals or c) is a dead animal. The editor's decision is final, his shoe size is 10 and his hair is currently protected by the National Trust and a special detachment from St Winfred's school choir. The compo closes on January 5th so hard poo to any entries that arrive late!

GAMES REVIEW!

JET SKI SIMULATOR



Well here we have, *Championship Jet Ski Simulator* and what amazing feats of daring Jet Ski do can you undertake. None. Not a sausage. Not even the slightest wet wheelie. This game gives you all the misery of screaming around in the wet without even the exciting possibility of catching pneumonia or wearing a rubber suit (fnar), but wait - does the game have any merits at all? Yes it does. What you can do is race against a friend around a variety of wet, wet, wet courses and listen attentively to the sampled voice. Is that enough to warrant you buying it? I should think not but if you're daft enough to buy it then you're daft enough to read about it and I'm more than daft enough to write about it so here we go....

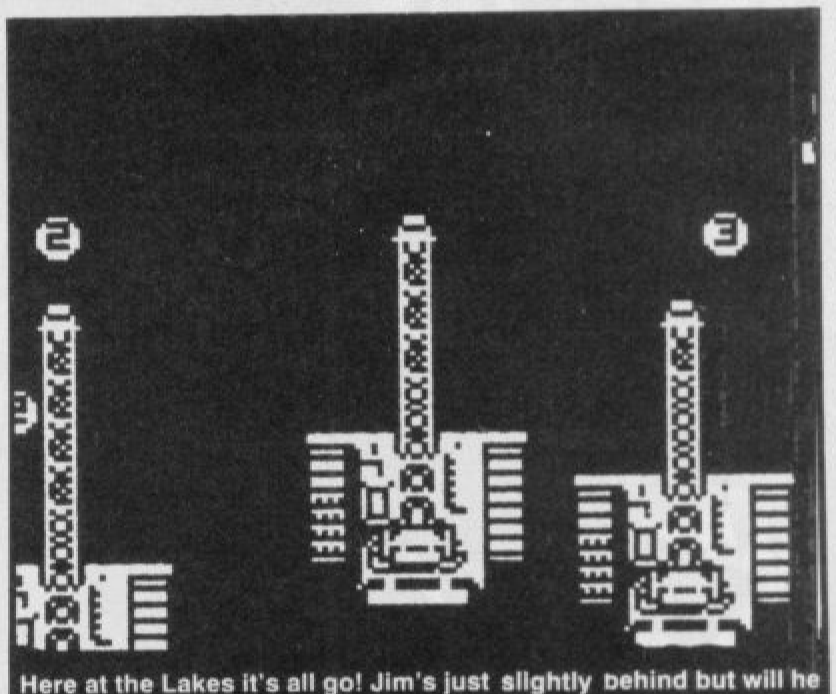
Up to two jet skis out of the four that race can be controlled by players, with control being; rotate clockwise or anti-clockwise and fire to accelerate. Each course is marked by gates with ascending numbers showing the route that you must follow. The way to race is by sliding the jet ski arund the corners. It's a sort of aquaplane skid and it's tricky to pick up but once you've mastered it the control becomes quite authentic. What does he mean authentic? I hear you cry from the depths of your armchairs. Well na na di na na to you mateys! I've jet skied with the best down the RIver Cole so I know!

The options screen at the begining gives a menu for 1 or 2 players and names can be entered for the contestants. There's a high score table and a controls menu that gives you numerous options for control over the two player's machines. Full marks to the twins for putting such a useful front end on the game.

On to the race courses. There are two locations for racing; the Lakes which is easy peasey - the only obstacles are the odd jetty and weed beds which slow down your engine - or the Docks which, as you might imagine, are full of boats and weirs and general dockish sort of bits, hence the courses twist and turn like the hands of an arthritic journalist. (Oh yes? So why can't we prise them open when you've got money in them? Jim & Al).

After each race there's a full run down of your times and performance giving lap times for each curcuit with a total time, your time bonus and your score. There's even a replay option that will show the last race again so that you can study your performance. Each time you qualify in a race you move onto the next course. The options menu is as comprehensive as any that may grace a full price game and it's a nice touch - so is the sampled voice that starts each race.

Jet skiing is fun, wildly exciting and wet. This game is fun for two but definitely a little wet when playing on your own. It's a reasonable race game but a simulator - no way! I think that the sooner someone decides that the Trade Description Act should be applied to the word Simulator, the better and them perhaps race games will remain races and simulators will continue to be long and complicated and played by professional business people when they think that no-one will notice that the annual reports have suddenly turned into an F15 Eagle.



Here at the Lakes it's all go! Jim's just slightly behind but will he get past Garth on the next lap?

54



IThe dockyards call for some fancy jet skiing, and the water-splash at the top calls for a wet suit and a good run up.



ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

An average race game with above average sound.

CODE MASTERS Label: Code Masters Author: The Oliver Twins Price: £2.99 Memory: 48/128K Joystick: Various
Reviewer: Garth Sumpter

GRAPHICS	SOUND
64	88
87	67
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

OVERALL 73

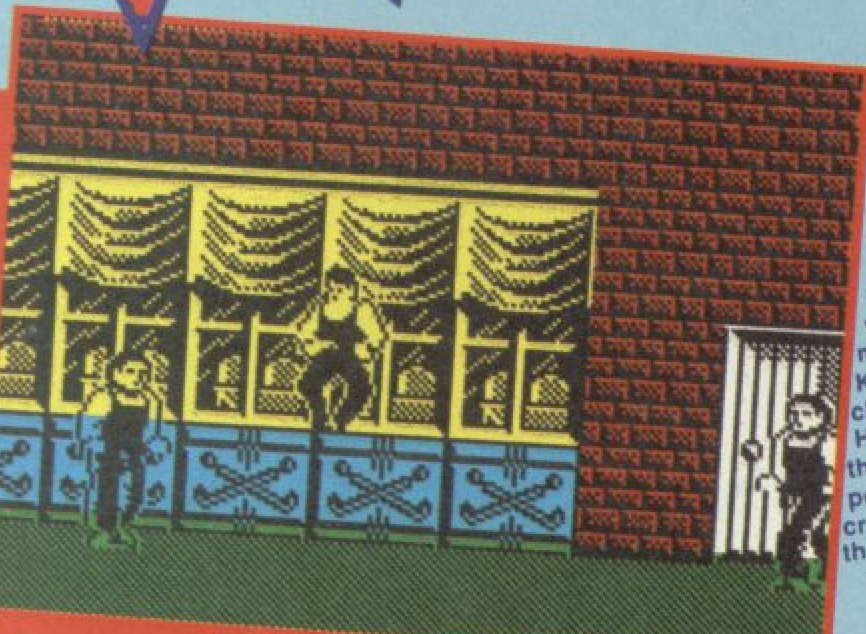


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'RE BACK!



SU CHARTS



FULL PRICE CHARTS COMMENT

Batman ruddy Batman, you just can't move for him, can you? Then again, we see you're still pretty mad about footy with Emlyn, Kenny and friends hogging a chunk of the SU chart. However, our tip for the top this month must be APB, that police drivey game which has crashed in from nowhere to nab the No.6 position.



BUDGET 10



1	(1)	CRAZY CARS Still hanging on to the top slot	HIT SQUAD £2.99
2	(2)	TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY This one just won't go away, will it?	CODEMASTERS £2.99
3	(4)	ENDURO RACER Motorbikey racey fun	HIT SQUAD £2.99
4	(NEW)	BATMAN 3D Nana nana nana nana Batman - he's everywhere	HIT SQUAD £2.99
5	(5)	POSTMAN PAT And his black and white cat	ALTERNATIVE £1.99
6	(6)	MIG 29 Zerwoosh. Akakakaak etc.	CODEMASTERS £2.99
7	(3)	GREEN BERET Dropping off the chart like a mad thing	HIT SQUAD £2.99
8	(8)	DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON Pole-breaking excitement with Lucozade.	HIT SQUAD £2.99
9	(NEW)	STRIKE FORCE HARRIER Sput, sput. Aka kak. Mrk II	ALTERNATIVE £2.99
10	(NEW)	TOP GUN Fly into the danger zone indeed	HIT SQUAD £2.99

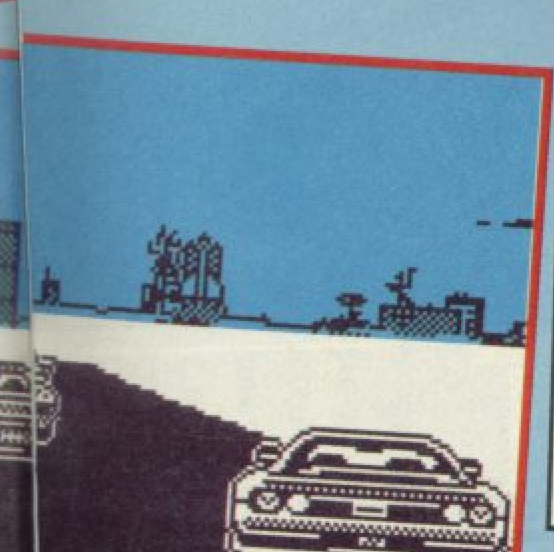
BUDGET CHARTS COMMENT

Please don't think we've printed the same Budget chart as last issue lovely reader, that's just the way things are this month with very few changes - boredom or wot? A few newies in the shape of Strike Force Harrier and Top Gun and something called Batman 3D (yawn)

FULL PRICE 20

COMPILED FOR SINCLAIR USER BY GALLUP





1	(4)	BATMAN - THE MOVIE Reviewed last month - no.1 as we predicted	OCEAN £9.99
2	(NEW)	BATMAN '88 Holy market saturation	OCEAN £8.95
3	(1)	INDIANA JONES - LAST CRUSADE Indy swings in and falls off a bit	US GOLD £8.99
4	(2)	ROBOCOP More classic clone capers	OCEAN £8.95
5	(8)	NEW ZEALAND STORY Sticky Tiki creeps up a smidge	OCEAN £8.99
6	(NEW)	APB The old bill storm in	TENGEN £9.99
7	(3)	CRAZY CARS 2 Stop and go	TITUS £8.95
8	(5)	KENNY DALGLISH SOCCER Kenny's side falls down the league	COGNITO £9.95
9	(NEW)	TREBLE CHAMPIONS More football management 'excitement'	CHALLENGE £9.95
10	(NEW)	RICK DANGEROUS Certain to make it to the top five	RAINBIRD £9.99
11	(13)	EMLYN HUGHES SOCCER Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee I'm dropping down the chart	AUDIOGENIC £9.99
12	(6)	DOUBLE DRAGON Still hanging on for dear life	MELBOURNE £9.99
13	(7)	DRAGON NINJA No 13 unlucky for some - esp if you're Dragon Ninja	OCEAN £8.95
14	(RE)	VIGILANTE The only game to get to No.14 in this chart (wha??)	US GOLD £8.99
15	(NEW)	PASSING SHOT Excellent tennis game	MIRRORSOFT £9.99
16	(11)	OPERATION WOLF In and out the chart like a rat up a drain pipe	OCEAN £8.95
17	(9)	RUN THE GAUNTLET Run that Gauntlet	OCEAN £8.99
18	(NEW)	SHINOBI There's obee one Shinobi	VIRGIN £9.99
19	(14)	FORGOTTEN WORLDS We were right - it is falling towards the end of the chart	US GOLD £8.99
20	(10)	LICENCE TO KILL Told you it was average - look it's at No. 20	DOMARK £9.99

SIMULATION

1	KENNY DALGLISH SOCCER	COGNITO
2	TREBLE CHAMPIONS	CHALLENGE
3	EMLYN HUGHES SOCCER	AUDIOGENIC
4	PASSING SHOT	MIRRORSOFT
5		

ARCADE

1	BATMAN - THE MOVIE	OCEAN
2	BATMAN '88	OCEAN
3	INDY - LAST CRUSADE	US GOLD
4	ROBOCOP	OCEAN
5	NEW ZEALAND STORY	OCEAN

gave to me...
a paper hat with "HIT ME" written on it, and a poke in the eye...

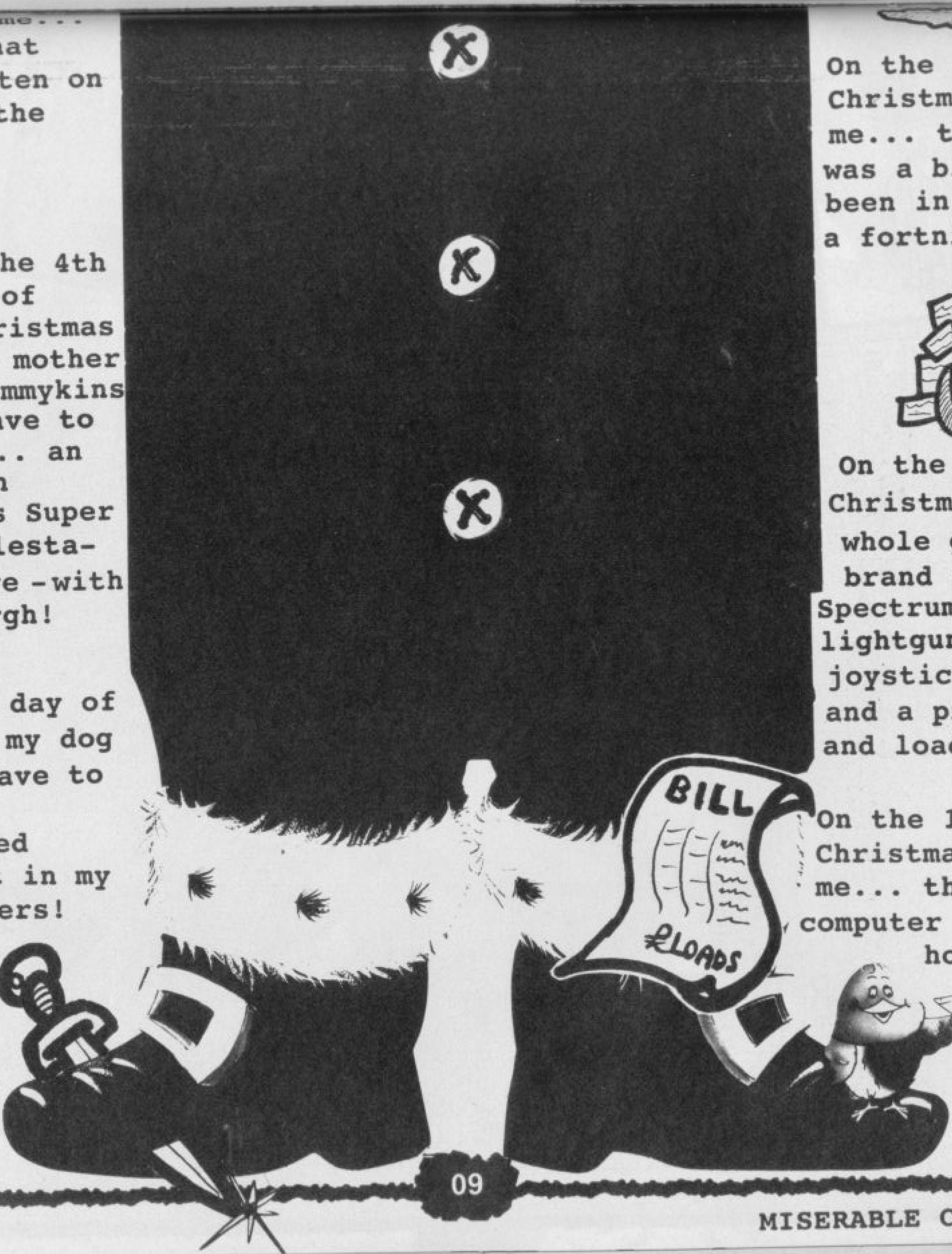


On the 4th day of Christmas my mother Mummykins gave to me... an Action Transformers Super Mental Space Battlestation Command Centre - with no batteries! Aargh!



On the 5th day of Christmas my dog Snapper gave to me... an unexpected present in my slippers!

On the 6th day of Christmas my extremely strange Uncle Madge gave to me... a book about gladiators...



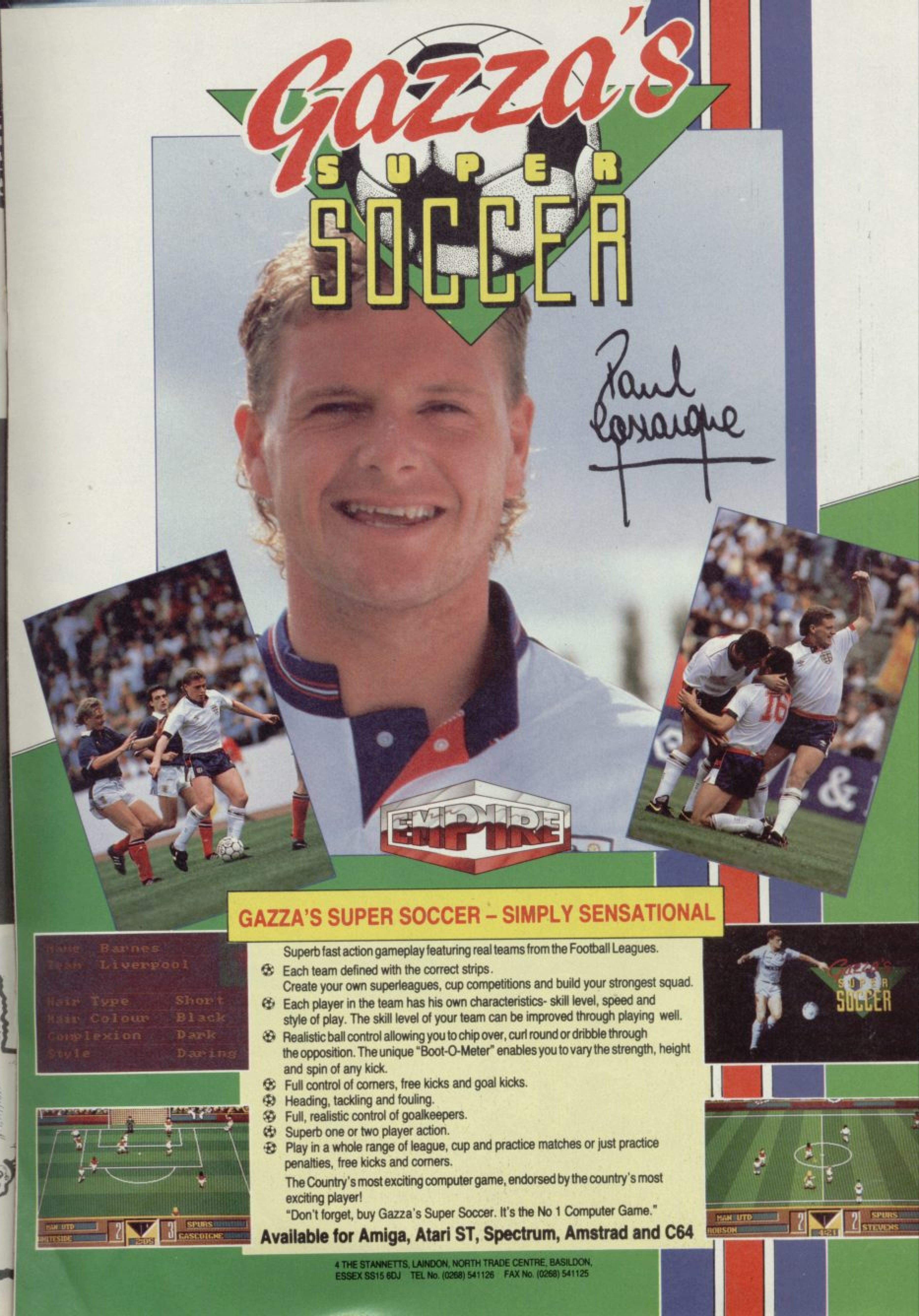
On the 10th day of Christmas my dad gave to me... the hamster, which was a bit whiffy having been in the parcel for a fortnight...

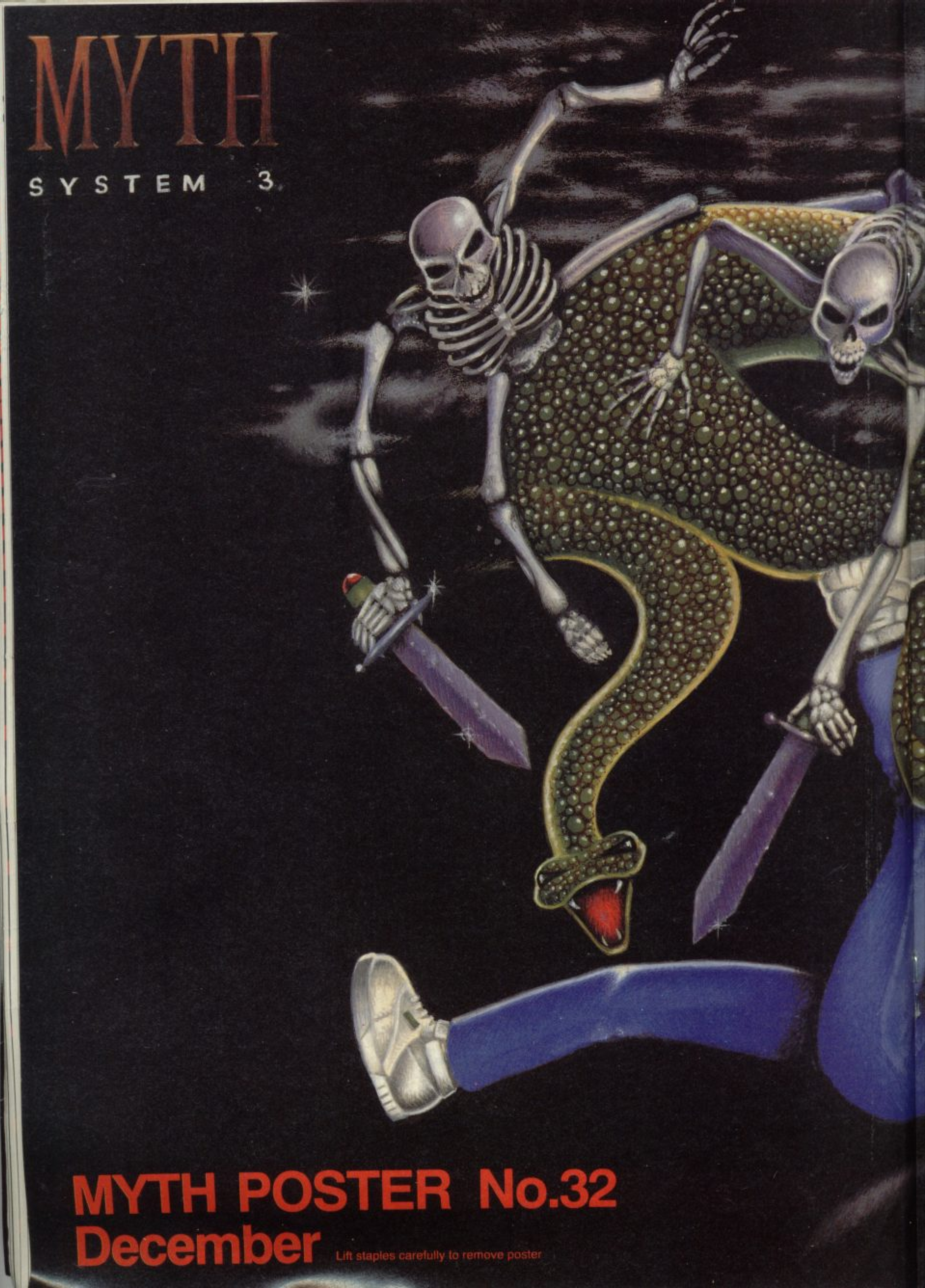


On the 11th day of Christmas my family as a whole gave to me... a brand spanking new Spectrum Plus 3 with a lightgun and disks and joysticks and a monitor and a printer and loads and loads of games!!!

On the 12th day of Christmas my dad gave to me... the bill from the computer shop and a note of how long it would take to pay for it all out of my pocket money! Waaaahhh!

MISERABLE CHRISTMAS, READERS!


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MYTH POSTER No.32
December

Lift staples carefully to remove poster

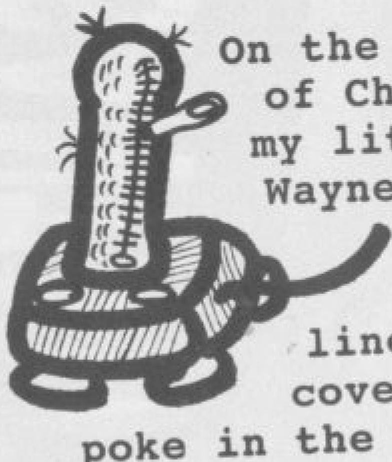

TONY HAGER


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TAITO
DRAGON NINJA
DATA EAST
imagine the name of the game
THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS
ACTIVISION
RESCUE THE HOSTAGES !
THAT WILL PIN YOUR BACK TO THE WALL!
ocean

WAYNE'S 12 DAYS OF XMAS



On the 1st day of Christmas my so-called "girlfriend" Charlotte gave to me... a poke in the eye with a leg of turkey...



On the 2nd day of Christmas my little sister Waynetta gave to me... a fur-lined joystick cover, and a poke in the eye with a leg of turkey...



On the 3rd day of Christmas my dad, Dad,





On the 7th day of Christmas my cat Fluffy gave to me...an odd look from where he was wedged under the door...



On the 8th day of Christmas tempers were wearing thin and my dad gave to me... a tremendous smack on the head with the Yule log!

On the 34th day of Christmas Mummykins gave to me... two aspirin and a Batman hamster-food container...



BLUE

X-O

Arc Developments are a software development company that seem to have had a low profile in the past. Is it because they're based in Walsall, one of the backwaters of Birmingham who's only claim to fame is probably the efficiency of their traffic wardens? Garth, our own boy racer, tried to park his car in Walsall...

"Go on, I'm only 15 minutes late," I said to the Lone Cowboy of the single yellow lines. With a crooked grin, a flash of his ballpoint and a flourish of white paper, he'd taken my number, written the ticket, stuck it to my forehead and sent his pen spinning back into his pocket before I could even rip out my press card.

It was somewhat surprising to find that this miserable minion's efficiency paled into insignificance alongside the quiet success of Arc Developments, whose gentle and unassuming manner is in direct contrast to their efficient, market-conscious and highly professional approach to business. They are the team responsible for US Gold's Forgotten Worlds and are currently working on X Out for Rainbow Arts. With a fresh parking ticket still attached to my forehead, I went to see how the team worked...



The Arc team from left to right: Warren McCormack (seated). Chris Coupe, Richard Underhill, Byron Nilsson, Paul Walker and Tim Round

Q: How did Arc Developments come into being?

Byron: We all worked for Elite as various parts of their in-house team, Paul arriving in April of 1987. I worked on Live and Let Die, Question of Sport and Pop Quiz. Chris wrote Hopping Mad and Storm Warrior on the C64 and Rich had had a stint on Overlander, Question of Sport and Pop Quiz. Paul, as a graphic designer had input into various programs but, like the rest of us, he found it dull and lacking so by October of '88 we'd all decided to set up together to do what we did for Elite but be able to have a far greater input into design of a game.

Q. What was your first job?

Paul: Forgotten Worlds for US Gold. We worked really hard on the game, to get the graphics right and make sure that the pro gram was at its best. We decided from the outset that the most important thing for us as a company was to produce good products ON TIME. We think we achieved that with F.W. and we intend to continue at as high a level as we can produce.



The end of level nasty looks dead hard. Shoot out his ventricles and then shoot the old bonehead right between the er... eyes



Q: So, X Out's your second job. How's it doing?

Byron: Well I'm working from the Amiga version of X Out from Rainbow Arts and I've got to squeeze as much as possible into the Spectrum. Rainbow Arts will give me a specification for the movement patterns and intelligence of enemy ships, mon-



PRINT

OUT

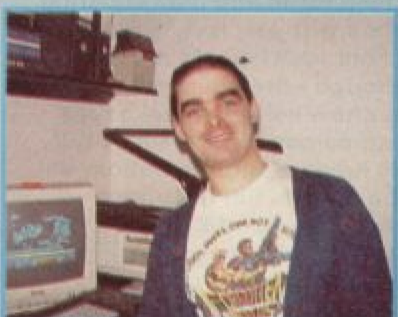


Being attacked by a sub when you're underwater show the depths the enemy are prepared to sink to in order to scupper your ship.

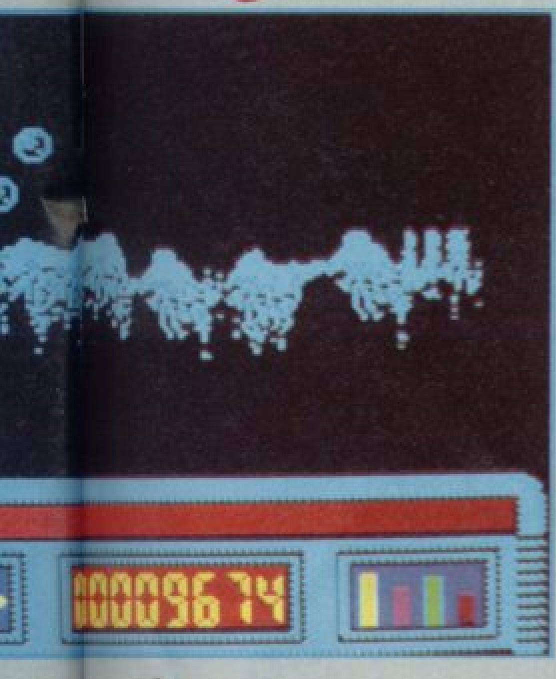
monsters and missiles and I have to implement them. So far, I've managed to get everything in but there is a fair bit of jiggery pokery con cerned with the backdrops.

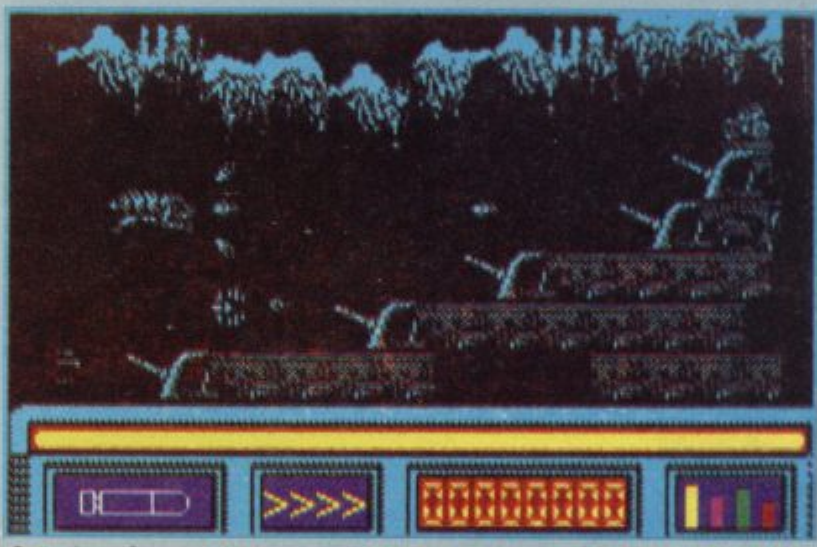
Q: Yes, what exactly happens with the graphics?

Byron: Graphics are first made up by Paul. He replicates the various ships and monsters, etc using Delux Paint 3 on an Amiga. I then try to move them around the screen according to the spec



fications I have to work to. This poses some problems. The Amiga has far more memory which isn't so much of a problem in terms of sprites but the backdrops have had to be redesigned by Paul using monochrome with various types of shading or stippling to achieve the desired results - this takes less memory. Also, the Amiga backdrops are made up of blocks - 64 are used on level 3 and the speccy just has to have less.





Arc developments are a young company that have nothing but success to build upon, and a dedication to their work that should act as a yardstick for other established companies to measure their success by. We will be following their progress closely in the New Year. And I have a feeling that other software development houses will soon be doing the same!

Q: Are there problems converting graphics from the Amiga version to the Spectrum?

Paul: Well, I draw the map from start to finish, and the longest screen is 7,040 pixels long. If you multiply this by the height of 256 you end up with 112K of pure backdrop. For the spectrum this has been condensed down to 6K which it does by recalling parts of the map and re-using them. It's like building a wall with lego bricks and taking bricks from the left hand side and using them to continue building it from the right.

Q: Why were monochrome graphics used?

Byron: Well, I've used a 'two pixel boundary' for movement which basically means that each sprite moves 2 pixels along for each cycle of the program. Colour only moves by 8 pixels per cycle so if there were colour sprites the colour would move once for every four moves of the sprite which gives the overall impression of it 'jumping' after the sprite.

Q: So you can't use colour and get smooth graphics?

Byron: No, not unless the sprites move quickly. The missiles move quite fast - between 8 and 16 pixel boundaries, so there's a good chance that I can use colour on them.

Q: How about sound. What's happening with that?

Paul: We want the sound to be as good as possible, and on the +2 and +3 machines we want to utilise the fact that the Spectrum shares the same sound chip as the Atari ST. These machines will have sampled music with the title sequence, taken from the Amiga version - the 48K machines will have some music but obviously this will be limited due to the memory size.

GAMES REVIEW!

SPITFIRE

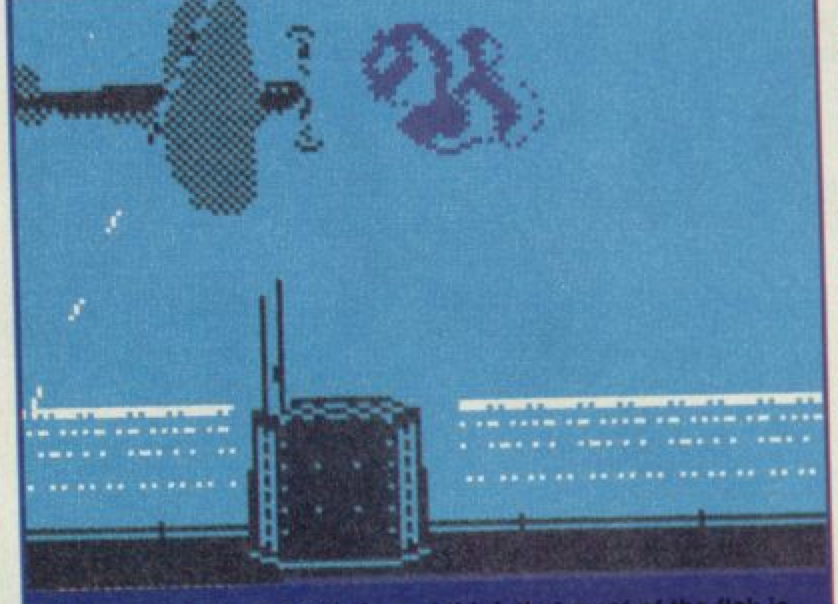
Contact! And it's chocks away as you fire up the engine and it bursts into life, lifting you high above the clouds to Angels twelve-O. England expects every man to do his duty and now it's your turn.

Spitfire is a previously unreleased game on the *Encore* label in which you don helmet, goggles and leather flying jacket and fly off into the wild blue yonder. And believe me, it IS wild. The skies are densely populated with Messerschmitt 109's, with one ambition in life - to send your Spitfire spiraling down to splash into the old briney or to make a large hole in a field somewhere that will be forever England - well, it will be forever dented Wilfred Owen me old china.

You are in control of Britain's great asset during the second world war. Yes, you are in the driving seat of Vera Lynn and you must fly her to her limits, take her across enemy territory and drop her on the hun. Ha! That should lead to an unconditional surrender within minutes.



The lone Spitfire is locked in an airial ballet of death as it weaves and dodges to get behind the Messherschmitt


Never mind the 109 old chum, I think that most of the flak is coming from that U Boat. Pity you don't have any bombs!

(Garth..GARTH! You can't drop Vera Lynn on the enemy it's just far too cruel. Get back to the plot! JIM)

Oh right. Well, in that case you can take a Spitfire instead. You begin the game with a squadron of eight and you must fly, for King George, across the channel avoiding enemy fire from ME 109's and shipping. This may seem like a tall order for a lone Spitty, but with it's superb handling you should be able to gob all over the opposition. The graphics in this game are good but the best part has to be the animation of the Spitfire. It is pretty good, with you being able to whack it into steep turns and play at daring doos with low level attacks.

Your instruments are simple enough - there's an altimeter to show height, a fuel gauge and damage is shown by bullet holes along the bottom of the screen. Fill the bottom of the screen and Ka-Boom. Bits of heroic flyer are scattered to the four winds.

Armament is of course a dakka dakka, which, as you probably know, is a nose mounted cannon, synchronised so as not to shoot your propeller off. This must be used sparingly as you don't want to use all your bullets before you reach your objective. Oh yes, there's more. You must fight your way across the channel, through flak and ME109's to destroy the V1 rocket launching sites that are harassing old Blighty and making mincemeat out of the airfields.

These are by no means easy to take out as the launching ramps project up so you must fly over them and then turn and attack from the other side or, if you want to do a Biggles try diving at them but be warned - it calls for split second timing to avoid crashing into them and going up in a ball of flame.

This is not an original idea but it is an original game and should give several hours of senseless shooting.


No, it's not a German fairground ride, it's a V1 rocket launch site and unless that Spittys got rails you're a goner.

ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

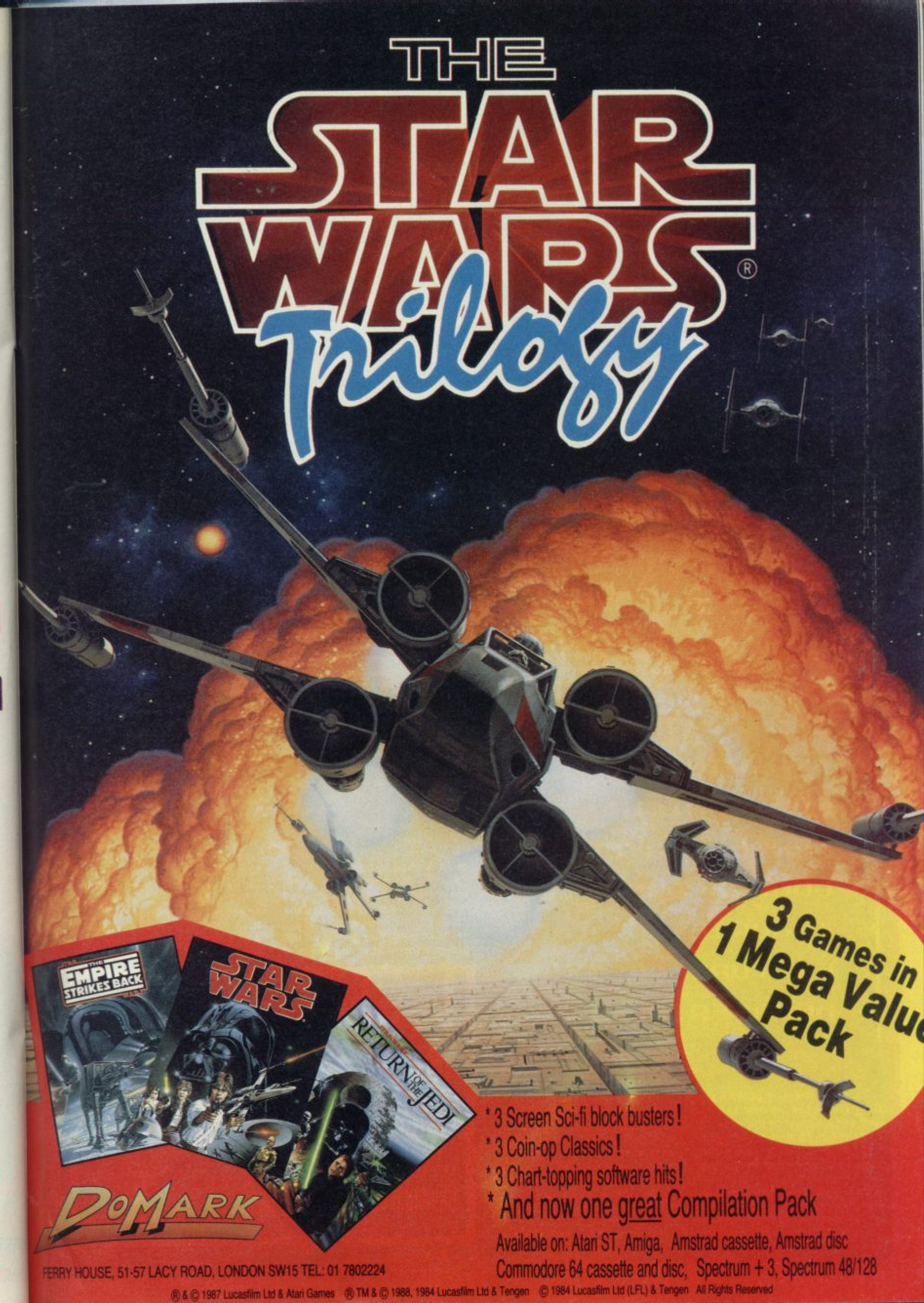
Easy to play and pretty to look at.

GRAPHICS	SOUND
78	78
83	81
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

SPITFIRE Label: *Encore*
Author: *In-house* Price: *£1.99* Memory: *48/+2/A*
Joystick: *Various*
Reviewer: Garth Sumpter

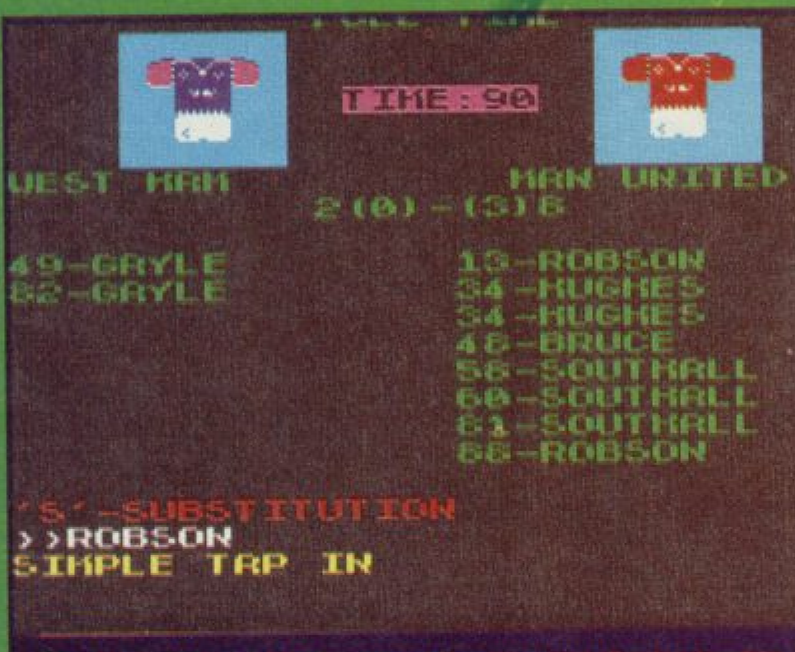
OVERALL 79

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90


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SOCCER 7

Ere we go, 'ere we go ere we go... "And here, indeed, do we go with errrr, yes there's some news just coming in...Yes Cult have released a budget game that's really not bad and should be able to compete with several of the football manager simulations on the market. Well, that's quite remarkable." Thank you Mr Coleman, and it's over to you Greavesy. "Yes, Saint well it's not sa baad. I fink it should give a cupla games somfink ta' worry abaart. Cult've been getting a bit of a reputataion fer not giving 100% so it's great ta see vat they've got a star player and lets 'ope this will see 'em turn around and start building a stronger side fer the new season."



Man United play a blinder under the questionalbe leadership of soccer supermo Garth 'If in doubt, kick it out' Sumpter.

Soccer 7 is a seven-a-side manager simulation, that takes you through the trials and tribulations of managing a squad of 10 players. You begin by choosing a team from eight and play is set up between two groups of four teams. You must manage your side and keep abreast (fnarr) of how the opposition fare.

Players are broken down into four key groups; Goalkeeper, Defense, Midfielders and Attack. There are nine in each team which includes two reserves with the tenth player in each squad joining in by watching from the sidelines and shouting "You're gonna get your bloomin' head kicked in!"



The manager's options menu. Morale isn't too great - is it some changing room arguement between Garth and Gazza?

To start, the computer sorts the fixtures for the first season and shows a list of the order of matches both home and away indicating which teams are playing who. At the beginning, all the players in the squad are shown along with their energy level which begins at a sprightly 100 and their average performance which begins at zero

To begin the season you can load in a saved game or start from scratch and from one to eight teams can be controlled by the players. You are asked which of the teams you would like to manage, and once chosen, you can change the name of the manager and the players to whatever you like.

Real control of the team only begins once you are due to play a match. At this point all the nerve and verve of a football boss comes into play. Changing the team around, allocating part of the 40 hours towards either fitness or skill training, trading players, checking the leagues and even having a sneaky look at the manager's ratings - all are done via the pre-match menu. The team morale is also shown here - a low morale can lead to a team's low performance so winning matches is sooo important.

And so the whistle blows and the match begins. This is a text only affair with each team's strip (Oo-er), shown at the top of the screen. You decide on the playing formation, the level of aggressiveness that the team play at as a value between 1 and 9 and what type of game you play. For example, if you are playing an attacking game you can play it using either; Wingers, Long Balls (fnarr) or a slowly, slowly approach.

As the minutes slowly tick away, you are updated each time someone puts a ball in the back of the net. This tells you who scored and how they did it and at all times you have the option of sending on a substitute. Stabbing enter repeatedly will speed up the game between goal reports. On the final whistle the team's performance is rated and any injuries or bookings are shown. At this point you can assess the individual players and if someone is looking like they have two left feet, you should think about passing him on to someone else the next time you have a chance to trade players.

The game continues until you get to the end of the season where the two top clubs from each of the two groups go into a semi final - get past that and there's just the final between you and complete stardom as manager of the season.

I have to admit to be a big fan of football sims and this game certainly rates better than some I've seen and Soccer 7 really puts the boot in for games like World Cup Carnival and Handball Maradonna. At £2.99, with the option of eight managers playing together, I think it offers good value and if you've got seven mates around the house then what else could you do on a dull wet Saturday when your own team is playing away?

FAX BOX

ARCADE REVIEW

Play it with your mates and you'll have a ball.

GRAPHICS	SOUND
71	NA
76	72
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

SOCCER 7 Label: CULT Author: In-house Price: £2.99 Memory: 48/128K Joystick: None

Reviewer

OVERALL 74

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

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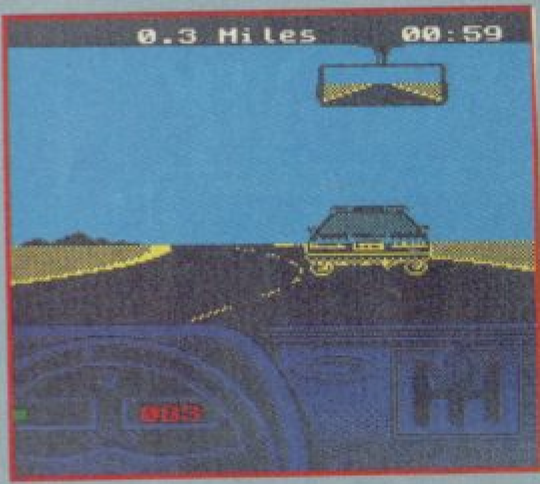
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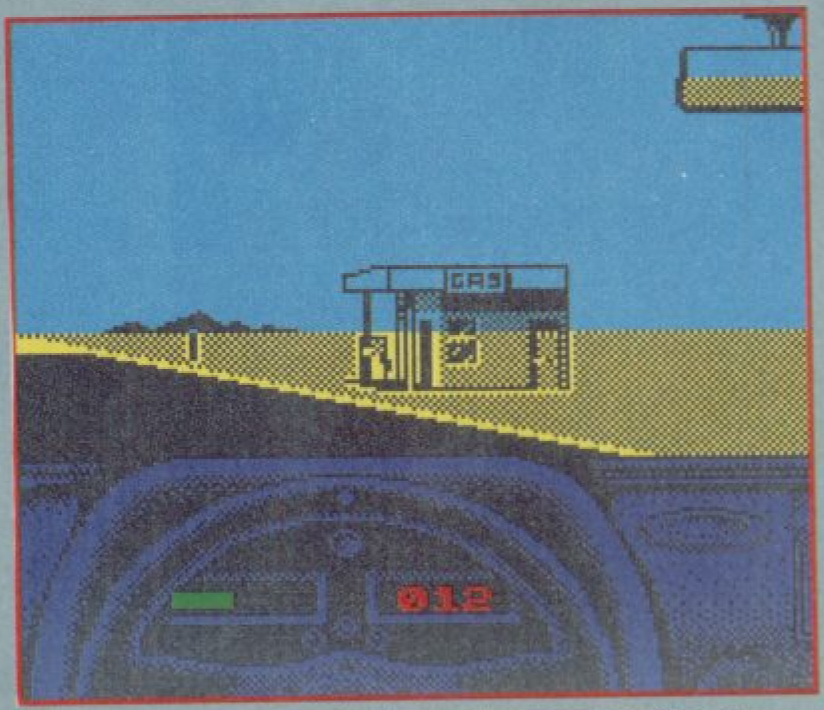
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BLUE



The Duel , or Test Drive II, is being developed by the programming team Random Access. The programmer responsible for The Duel is Alan Jardine, who was formally involved in the 16-bit whirligig project and other 16-bit projects. The challenge of producing The Duel, the Accolade first person driving game, lured Alan back to the Spectrum after two years of 16-bit work.

I visited Alan at The Sales Curve's office, where Random Access are based, and unleashed a barrage of questions!

Q: Presumably you had a graphic artist to draw all the cars and cacti, but how did you approach drawing the road?

In most arcade games all the graphics are drawn by an artist and then put together in the right way on screen by the programmer. For the parts of the graphics which could be drawn by an artist, Ned Langman, another member of Random Access, drew some really great cars and thing. However, with The Duel most of the display area needs to be calculated.

Although the position of bends and tunnels along the course doesn't change from game to game, the player's position and angle on the road as he approaches them does. For this reason it is impossible to store away all the views from the car window - there are literally millions of different view points along the course.

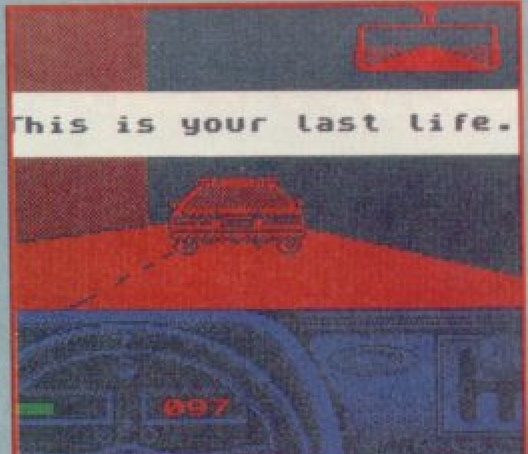
Q: So the computer has to figure out what the player can see from any given point on the course, and display it?

Precisely, and that takes some fairly complex mathematics. But when you can do that, the illusion of forward motion is achieved by simply stepping the view point down the course.

Q: How do you actually decided what the road looks like and how do you draw it?

The computer holds a map of the course, this map is in terms of sections; the first half mile is straight, then there is a bend, then a cliff appears, and so on.

PRINT



First the computer looks at how far along the course the player is. It then steps slowly forward through the map, at each step remembering that it is moving slightly further away from the position of the player's car, and therefore up the display. One step forward is one pixel line higher on the display... more or less anyway.

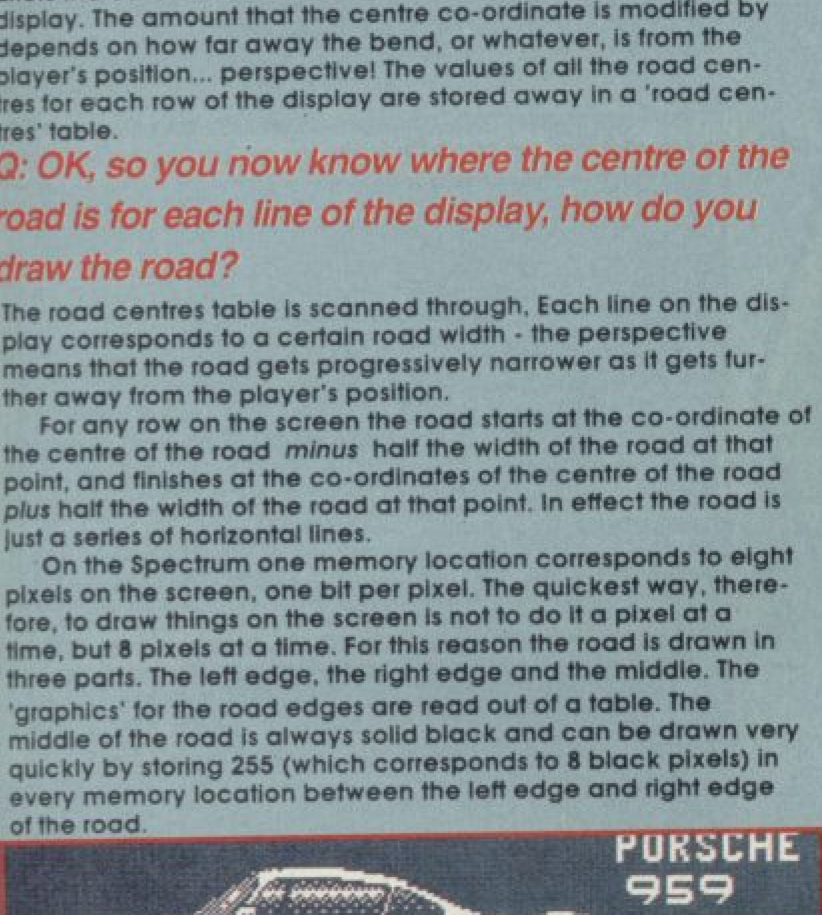
At each step forward it sees if the road is bending to the right or left, or just continuing forward; depending on what it is doing it alters the co-ordinate of the road centre for this pixel line on the display. The amount that the centre co-ordinate is modified by depends on how far away the bend, or whatever, is from the player's position... perspective! The values of all the road centres for each row of the display are stored away in a 'road centres' table.

Q: OK, so you now know where the centre of the road is for each line of the display, how do you draw the road?

The road centres table is scanned through. Each line on the display corresponds to a certain road width - the perspective means that the road gets progressively narrower as it gets further away from the player's position.

For any row on the screen the road starts at the co-ordinate of the centre of the road *minus* half the width of the road at that point, and finishes at the co-ordinates of the centre of the road *plus* half the width of the road at that point. In effect the road is just a series of horizontal lines.

On the Spectrum one memory location corresponds to eight pixels on the screen, one bit per pixel. The quickest way, therefore, to draw things on the screen is not to do it a pixel at a time, but 8 pixels at a time. For this reason the road is drawn in three parts. The left edge, the right edge and the middle. The 'graphics' for the road edges are read out of a table. The middle of the road is always solid black and can be drawn very quickly by storing 255 (which corresponds to 8 black pixels) in every memory location between the left edge and right edge of the road.



Q: What about cars and road side objects?

They are drawn as sprites. Initially we were thinking about writing software scaling routines, to change the size of an object *in real time* as it comes towards the player - we soon realised that this slows the game down considerably, and therefore we cheat by using several different objects - each slightly smaller than the last.

One fairly non-standard thing we had to do with the objects was to depth sort them. Obviously cars in the background must be obscured by cars in the foreground.

Rather than using complex masking techniques, the cars and other objects are sorted according to their distance from the player's position and then printed to the screen from the most distant to closest. This means that a car in the background is drawn before a car in the foreground and thus it gets covered up by the nearer car if they overlap.

Q: What about actually printing the objects?

To speed object printing up eight different routines are used, each routine drawing the object to a different pixel position. Because pixels come in groups of eight the quickest way of printing the objects is to use eight different routines, each of which moves the pixels in the sprite onto the 8-pixel group boundaries correctly.

Because all objects in the game can change size, as they approach the player, the object drawing routines can handle objects of any size. This makes for a little more complexity, but it is easier than having routines to draw single size objects and building up big objects out of groups of small objects.

Q: Did you have trouble making the game run quickly?

That was probably the hardest part of the entire project. All the calculations that had to be performed every time the screen was regenerated certainly took their toll on the poor old Spectrum.

The maths wouldn't be too bad if such precision wasn't needed. Most video games can get away using numbers between 0 and 255 for aliens (x,y) co-ordinate and things, with The Duel that was simply not possible. In many case I had to scale down 32 bit numbers, that means BIG numbers for the non-programmers - scaling down small numbers is slow enough.

Q: Aren't there quite a few relatively fast driving games on the Spectrum?

Yes, but they have got it easy, really. On The Duel you can drive off the road and drive back onto it at a funny angle - in all other driving games, that I know of, the player is not in the driving seat - they are looking down at the car from above.
In The Duel, as the player swings across the road the whole screen has to swing around. Because the player is in the car looking out of the window a whole new level of complexity is added to all calculations. First person perspective really pushes the Spectrum to its limit. I guess The Duel should be considered a driving simulator rather than a driving game.

Q:What kind of control does the player have over the car?

Obviously the player can steer, accelerate and decelerate. One feature unique to The Duel is that it has gears. Just like a real car you can over rev and blow the engine. Deciding the optimum time to change gear adds another dimension of reality not available on most other games.

Q:Are you pleased with the finished product?

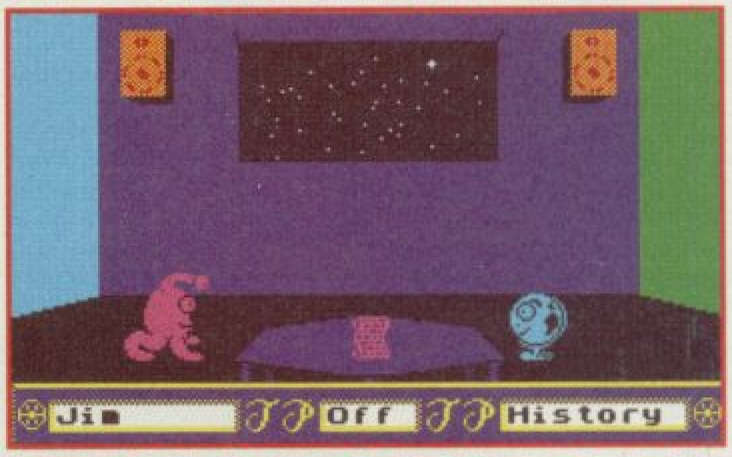
Yes. I think that for a first person perspective driving game it works remarkably well on the Spectrum. It has a good feel to it - driving off the road and going exploring can be quite amusing. Obviously one or two things in the Amiga version were not possible to include in the Spectrum version, but I think that we made all the right decisions about what must stay and what could go.

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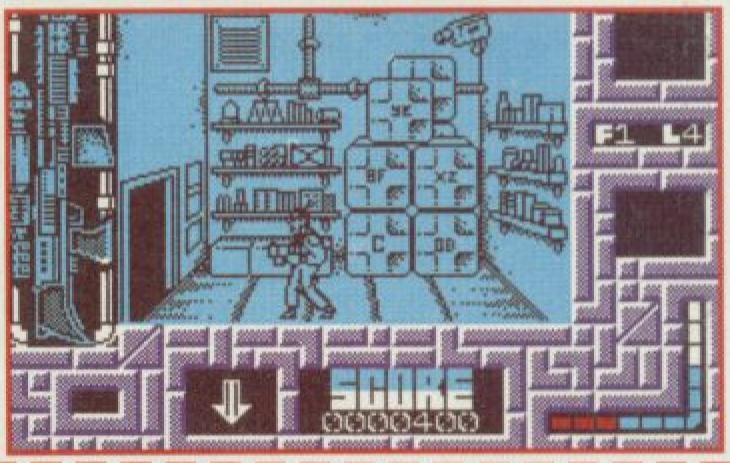
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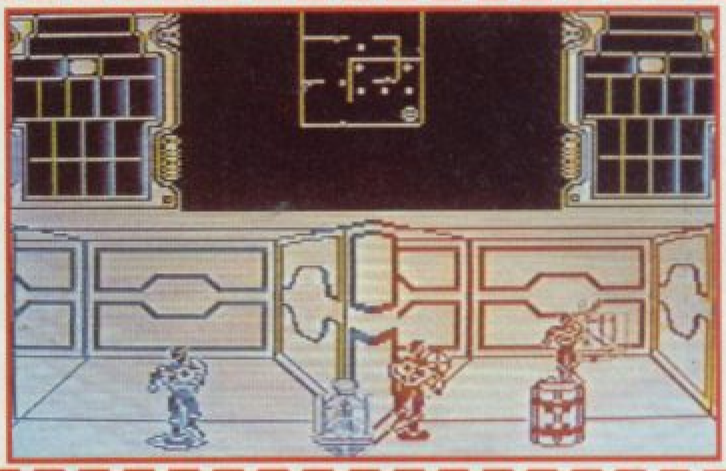
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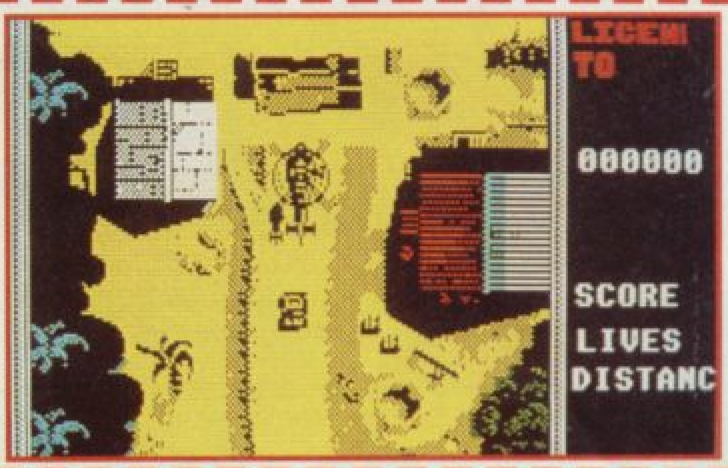
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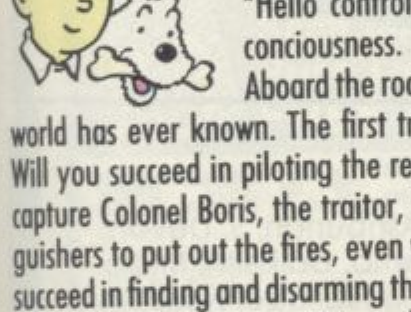
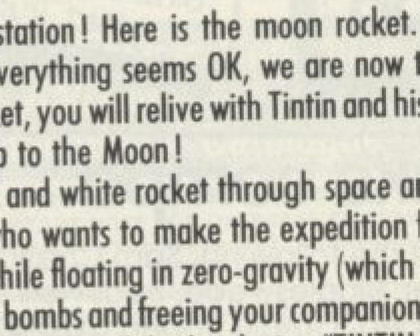
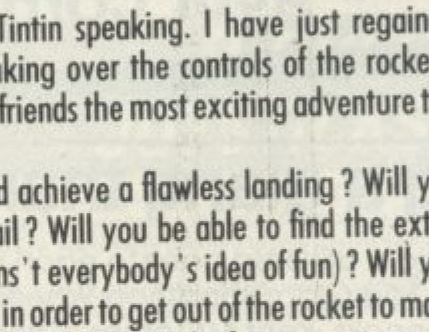
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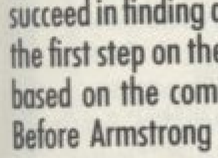


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I'll be having a giant, thanks compo

A copy of Giants game from US Gold goes to each of the following: Sam Chew, Ashburton, S. Devon Charles Ward, Rhondda, Mid Glam Jonathan Wheeler, Biggleswade, Beds Neill Lamb, Dalkeith, Midlothian Richard Long, Sevenoaks, Kent Mr Tomes, Cyncoed, Cardiff Robert Coxhill, Puckeridge, Herts AA Grimmes, Alton, Hants Cedric Davidson, South Gosforth, Tyne & Wear Daniel Cranage, Hastings, E. Sussex Richard Paterdon, Ardentinny, Argyll M Greaves, Leicester Stewart King, Wetherby, W. Yorks R Thomas, Newport, Gwent Glen Elliott, Binstead, Isle of Wight Christian James, Felixstowe, Suffolk Jason Pontin, Farnborough, Hants Keith Drayton, Ilminster, Somerset Robin Hilder, Rogate, Hants Gary Evans, Anfield, Liverpool Simon Parker, Cardiff Alastair Willis, Cupar Muir, Fife Richard Francis, Newton Means, Glasgow Raymond Vickers, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham Kris Griffin, Stoulton, Worcs

I'VE GOT THIS PROBLEM

...AND SO HAS MY MATE

Dr Rupe, We're having problems together with my +2. What happens is that the 128k music doesn't appear to work with some games - the first one was Bubble Bobble. With this, the music played the first time we loaded the game, but never again. Others, like Kickstart 2, don't work at all. What's wrong?

Matthew Johnson and Adrian Travis Address unknown

•Two things might be wrong - if you're loading them in 48K mode, then the sound chip won't work. But I'm sure you're not that daft, so it sounds (hoho) like there's a subtle fault in the computer. Different games access the sound chip in different ways, so it's possible that there's something very obscure that only affects some software. Can't say more than that, though, so trot off and get the machine fix toot-sweet.

..WITH ME JET SET WILLY

Dear Singh, please can you help me? I have the game Jet Set Willy, but I've lost the coded piece of paper which allows you to start the game. Is there a poke to get past the stupid protection?

Anonymous Somewhere in Gillingham Dorset

•Ever wondered what a sharp intake of breath looks like in print? Fwooorh. There, that's what. We can't go publishing things like that, because it would only encourage nasty evil pirates to rip off games (apparently some people do this, hard as it may be to believe). This does mean that you've got a problem - try writing to the publishers of this ancient game with some proof that you've got a legal copy (try photocopying the cassette) and they should send you a spare card, if they've got any heart.

...SAVING ROM

Dear Sir, I've got a 48K Spectrum that's been upgraded to a Plus with an Interface 1, which I use with Tasword Two and an Epson DX-100 daisywheel printer. This works quite well, with one problem. If I take the printer off-line, say to feed paper in or out, then when I put it on-line again it will not receive any information from the Spectrum. I have to turn the printer off and on again at the mains before it will work. It worked with an Atari when I tested it. I'm mystified.

Peter Hopkins Ryde, Cheshire

• and I', Doctor Goodwins - pleased to meet you. Ahem. This looks like a handshaking problem - the printer probably sets a signal to say "Don't send any more data" when you take it off-line, and this may not be reset when you back on-line. The other computer you tried it with may not be testing that signal before sending information. You could try removing the wire from pin 4 on the Spectrum end of the lead, and hook pin 4 to pin 6, but this may lose you characters on long documents. If your printer has the choice between X-ON/X-OFF and hardware handshaking, choose the latter, since that's the version the Spectrum uses.

...AND I NEED A STYLUS

Dear Wayne, Please, please, please, please could you tell me where I could get a Stylus for a fair price for the Spectrum +2? Please look everywhere, I need a Stylus.

"Desperate" Stanley, Co. Durham

•{BLOB} Dear Desperate. A stylus is used with a gramophone to turn the little wiggles in the grooves into sound - monophonic, or stereophonic with the appropriate equipment. A Spectrum +2 is not a gramophone, but a computer, and even if fitted with a stylus can reproduce neither mono nor stereo records. Indeed, it would probably damage them beyond recognition, and thus can only be recommended for Kylie Minogue. I suggest you try What Boring Old Drivel And HiFi Yawn.

Dear Dr Puke (here, steady on old man. We have your pet rabbit hostage - RG) I bought a Star LC-10 printer which works fine with my +3 for screen copies. However, I had problems with LPRINT and LLIST until I discovered that POKE 23354,62 and POKE 23355,16 made the printer burst into life here too. I know this isn't a problem, but I just thought that other readers might find it useful.

Clinton Rindfuss No Address Supplied

•I'm sure they will, and so I've arranged for your pet rabbit to be released. Thanks.

HOW TH

...DO WE FILL THE GAP?

Games programming is very challenging because each new game demands innovation and features which are different from past games. This usually means that we have to come up with new routines that are written from scratch for each game. Business programmers have got it easy - they can draw on stock routines such as calculators, display routines etc and just tailor the stock routines into a new package with a so called 'new' product at the end of the day.

The subject of this month's discussion is the 'fill' routine. It will always be associated with graphical programs by virtue of its task, but it is seldom seen in games because quite frankly, a 'fill' usually runs at a snails pace. However, a programmer would not usually come up with a new fill algorithm and I have used the same program for years now.

Figure 1 has the source code listing in machine code for the basic fill algorithm. It is quite short considering the job it has to do but then again it is fairly efficient in terms of speed. The program is quite complex in operation as it is recursive - ie. it keeps calling itself until it has finished.

RECURSION

This term needs a little explanation. A common routine structure is a LOOP. Loops appear all over the place. FOR/NEXT instructions in BASIC are probably the type known to most people but the format of a loop is nearly always as shown here:-

Using a counter.

1. Set a counter 2. Perform the program task 3. Decrement counter 4. Go back to stage 2 until counter = 0 5. Finished

Using a test to terminate the loop.

1. Perform the program task 2. Perform the test - eg. read keyboard 3. Go back to stage 1 until test fails 4. Finished

The first stage in a loop structure can involve setting a counter. This is followed by the program main body and finally there is some form of 'decrement counter and jump back if not zero' type of arrangement. The number of loops is determined by a counter or it could be a test - say reading a keyboard to see if a key is being pressed. A loop cannot loop forever or we would have a 'lock-up' situation and so there is always some conditional situation for a loop to work successfully. A RECURSIVE program is one whereby it CALLs itself from within itself:-

```
PROGRAM:
]]]CALL PROGRAM         RET
```

Yes! It is daft. The code above would just make the machine crash. It is not the same as a lock-up condition that can happen in a bug ridden loop but it is making the stack grow to enormous proportions until something gibes. Practical Recursion is not as daft as this but is typically like this instead:-

```
LD (MEM),SP PROGRAM:]]]
CALL COMPLICATED_TEST
CALL NZ,PROGRAM
LD SP,(MEM)
RET
```

This is only an illustration of what a recursive routine is all about. In the above instance, the sub-routine COMPLICATED_TEST has a conditional result - namely zero or not zero. In the not zero case the whole lot is called again (with the stack growing by two bytes per call). If we relate this to the fill routine we can see that the complex task of determining which pixels need 'filling' can only be done on a pixel by pixel basis. Effectively we check one pixel to see if it is filled and we store the status of the four pixels adjacent to the one we are testing.

If any of the four adjacent pixels need filling then we will want to re-enter the program again but wit a new central pixel forming the basis of the complicated test. This will happen until there are no more pixels to fill and all adjacent ones have been filled - hence the condition to loop back will fail when the program has done its job. The stack printer can be restored as shown for simplicity. The fill routine in figure 1 does not actually CALL itself from within but it jumps back at FI130.

Before you say 'ah, but that's a conditional loop then', just look at the couple of PUSH HL and PUSH AF instructions embedded in the main body of code. These pushes contain a screen co-ordinate and flags for the testing process to determine pixels which need filling. Initially BC is used to push FF00 Hex on the stack as a Stop Code. As the various values get 'popped' off the stack we only return when this value of FF00 Hex crops up. This is our condition that prevents the program going mad and never returning.

A recursive routine is a very difficult type of routine to design and unfortunately it seems to be cropping up in more and more kinds of programming areas. The printed circuit board design packages which are being used in the CAD field are a good example of recursive design.

The routine wants typing into an assembler and basically you can assemble it anywhere convenient but do remember to provide adequate RAM for the stack to grow (downwards remember!). I have omitted to put a stack check in this program as it only makes it longer and more complicated. In practice I just allow 600 bytes or so of stack space and this is usually enough. Only in this case it is not really a blank but part of the design of a tile pattern. Plotting tile patterns will only succeed in making the routine lock-up as it would be going around in circles trying to do the job!

HE HELL

Figure 1 - The fill routine

PROGRAM .... FILL ROUTINE FOR SPECTRUM

```
        ORG 8000H
        ;
        LD DE,(XYPOS)
        LD BC,FF00H          ;PUTTING THE STOP CODE OF OFF00H
        PUSH BC              ;ON THE STACK
        LD B,C
FI10:   LD H,D               ;HL = DE = SCREEN CO-ORDINATE
        LD L,E
        CALL FTEST           ;INITIAL SCREEN TEST
        JR Z,FI30
FI20:   POP BC               ;POP FLAG OFF STACK
        LD A,B
        SCF
        INC A
        RET Z                ;IF = OFFH THEN RETURN - WORK DONE!
        POP DE               ;IF NOT THEN GET SCREEN INTO DE
        JR FI10              ;AND CONTINUE
FI30:   CALL FPLOT           ;THE ACTUAL 'FILL' IE. A PLOT
        BIT 7,B
        JR Z,FI40
        INC L
        JR FI50
FI40:   LD A,4
        DEC L
        AND A
FI50:   JR Z,FI60
        CALL FTEST           ;CHECKING A PIXEL TO SEE IF IT
        JR NZ,FI60           ;NEEDS FILLING
        BIT O,B
        JR NZ,FI70
        SET O,B
        LD A,B
        CPL
        AND 80H
        PUSH HL              ;SAVING SCREEN AND FLAG PARAMETERS
        PUSH AF              ;FOR LATER
        JR FI70
FI60:   RES O,B
FI70:   LD L,E
        LD C,2
        INC H
        LD A,H               ;CHECKING TO SEE IF WE ARE GOING OFF
        CP 192               ;SCREEN
FI80:   JR Z,FI90
        CALL FTEST           ;TESTING TO SEE IF PIXEL IS ON OR OFF
        JR NZ,FI90
        LD A,B
        AND C
        JR NZ,FI100
        LD.A,B
        OR C
        LD B,A
        AND 81H
        PUSH HL              ;SAVING PIXEL CO-ORDINATES AND FLAGS
        PUSH AF              ;ON THE STACK FOR LATER
        JR FI100
        FI90:
        LD A,C
        CPL
        AND B
        LD B,A
FI100:  SLA C
        BIT 2,C
        JR Z,FI110
        LD H,D
        LD A,H
        DEC H
        AND A
        JR FI80
FI110:  FIT 7,B
        JR NZ,FI120
        INC E
        JR FI130
FI120:  LD A,E
        DEC E
        AND A
        FI130:
        JP NZ,FI10           ;THE RECURSIVE BIT - JUMPING BACK TO
        JP FI20              ;START AGAIN WITH NEW PARAMETERS ON THE
FPLOT:                       ;CALLED TO PLOT A PIXEL
        PUSH BC              ;SAVE REGISTERS FROM CORRUPTION
        PUSH HL
        CALL GET_SCR         ;CALCULATE SCREEN ADDRESS
        OR (HL)              ;OR IN THE PIXEL - FILLING IT
        LD (HL),A            ;STORE NEW SCREEN BYTE
        POP HL               ;RESTORE REGISTERS
        POP BC
        RET FTEST:           ;CALLED TO TEST IF A PIXEL IS THERE OR NOT
        PUSH BC              ;SAVE BC AND HL
        PUSH HL              ;
        CALL GET_SCR         ;CALCULATE SCREEN ADDRESS
        AND (HL)             ;TEST RELEVANT BIT ON SCREEN
        POP HL               ;RESTORE REGISTERS
        POP BC
        RET                  ;RETURN WITH ZERO/NOT ZERO
        GET_SCR:             ;CALLED TO CALCUALTE SCREEN ADDRESS
                             ;FROM CO-ORDINATES IN HL
        LD A,H               ;SET UP THE HIGH BYTE FIRST
        SRL A                ;
        SCF                  ;
        RRA
        SRL A                ;A NOW HOLDS 010XXXXX
        XOR H                ;MERGE IN THE 3 LOWER BITS OF H
        AND OF8H             ;WITH BIT MERGE TECHNIQUE
        XOR H                ;OF XOR-
        AND-XOR
        LD B,A               ;B=HIGH BYTE OF SCREEN ADDRESS
        LD A,L               ;NOW PROCESS LOW BYTE
        RLCA                 ;GET BITS INTO RIGHT PLACES
        RLCA                 ;GET BITS INTO RIGHT PLACES
        RLCA                 ;
        RLCA                 ;
        XOR H                ;BIT MERGE AGAIN
        AND OC7H             ;
        XOR H                ;
        RLCA                 ;
        RLCA
        LD C,A               ;BC=SCREEN ADDRESS
        LD A,L               ;NOW WE PROCESS PIXEL POSITION WITHIN
        LD H,B               ;THE BYTE
        LD L,C               ;HL = BC
        AND 7                ;WE ARE ONLY CONCERNED WITH BITS 0-2
        LD B,A               ;USE B AS COUNTER
        INC B                ;B = 1 - 8
        LD A,1               ;A IS A BIT MASK GET10:
        RRCA                 ;ROTATE MASK INTO CORRECT PLACE
        JNZ GET10            ;LOOP BACK UNTIL DONE
        RET
        XYPOS:
        DEFB 127             ;THESE NUMBERS ARE THE SCREEN CENTRE
        DEFB 87              ;BUT PRE-LOAD THEM WITH THE FIRST PIXEL
                             ;CO-ORDINATE THAT YOU WANT FILLING.
```

COI

The leaves are falling off the trees, the hair is falling out of Jim's forehead and the punters are falling out of the Big Run cabinets as it sloshes 'em around - all this and more this month on coin-ops.

Midnight Resistance - Data East



Data East have been coming up with some corkers recently - Dragon Ninja, Robocop, and now ***Midnight Resistance.*** A combination of jumpy-jumpy and shooty, it's got a slightly novel control system, in that you get to twist the joystick 360 degrees which alters your direction of fire, while you have a normal 8-way movement at the same time...like in Ikari Warriors III. Zapper extrodinaire, you cream the nasty evil oppressors wi' gun....but the best bit comes when you finish the level and get to choose new weapons - stand in line for your flame thrower pleeassse!

Big sprites, good game play and it's doing ver well on test in London.

FAXBOX

Entertaining shoot-em up with well utilised, novel control system. Got to be worth a go....

Graphics 8 Sound 8
Gameplay 9 Addictiveness 8
Overall **9**



Pinball

Williams really do some great pinball tables, the latest of which is Police Force. Packed with features such as The Worlds First Moving Police Car in any Pinball it is a superb table for any level of player. But how do they fit a police car into a pinball machine?

Cue Brick - Konami

Anyone remember Confusion from Incentive - a Spectrum title of many moons ago if there ever was one. Well now there's something of the same ilk in the arcades, ***Cue Brick***.

The screen is a matrix of tiles, like a sliding block puzzle. There is a track jumbled-up in it, which you have to manipulate to make a ball roll along it and so finish the level.

Smart graphics make it fun to play - and although it might not be the most original or adrenaline-pumping effort - if you're in the right kind of mood it'd be worth a go or seven.



FAXBOX

Action brain teaser that'll make a change form the usual carnage.

Graphics 8 Sound 7
Gameplay 7 Addictiveness 6
Overall **7**

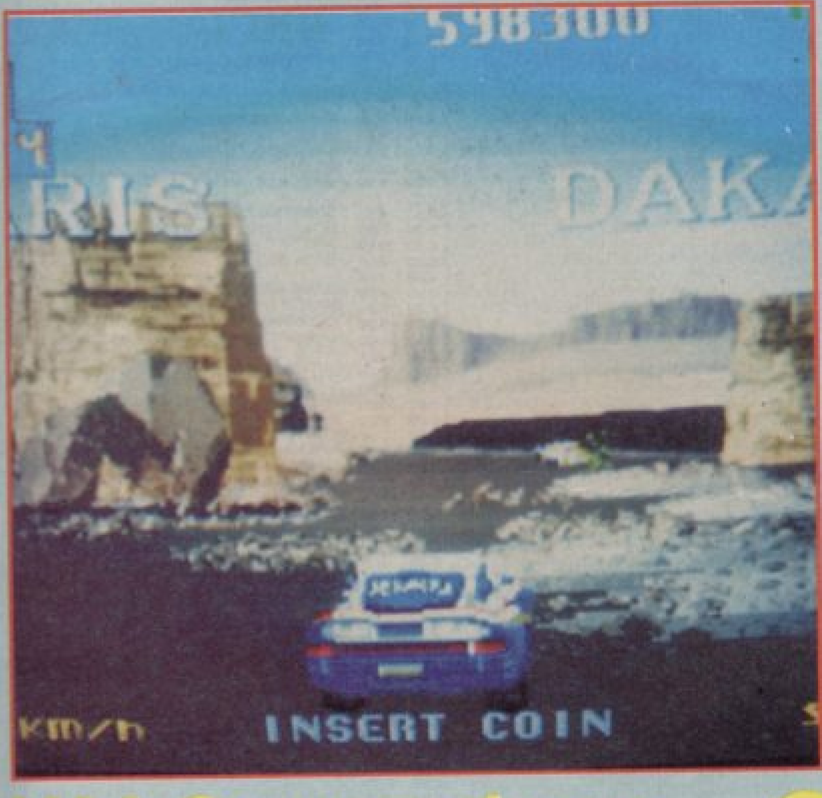


Big Run - Jaleco

Did you know that the most dangerous road race in the world is the Paris to Dakar road race? Worse even than the Ealing to Hanger Lane section of the North Circular so they say, gasp. In case you didn't know, Dakar is the capital of Senagal, which is situated on the West coast of the African continent and if you're into racing there from under the shadow of the Eifel tower, as they do, be warned that there are so many driver and spectator deaths in the event that each year various people get upset and try to have it banned. Maybe people will try to get the sit-down version of the Rally, Jaleco's ***Big Run***, banned too as it don't half upset your tummy after a big lunch.

Yup, ***Big Run*** is a driving game,complete with five big levels, and although it's not quite up to the standard of Super Monaco Grand Prix, it's still a good laugh. Controls are pretty simple, with a high/low gear stick and accellerator, brake and steering wheel. Jaleco further claim that the moveable sit-down imitates every rock and stone in the road and by golly it feels like it as you swerve about the place.

Fine graphics and sound make this a class release and I'd imagine that if you link the units together, like they say you can, it would make it even better to race against a peer group. Vroom!





FAXBOX

Pretty good racing/rally game with the added advantage of being able to link up with other units. Not Bad!

Graphics 8 Sound 8

dictiveness 7 Gameplay 8

8

UN Squadron - Capcom

Oh dearie, dearie, me. Just when we all thought that Capcom were going to come out with something really interesting after the amazing sucess of Strider and what happens? Barf! ***UN Squadron***.

This is a great looking horizontal scroller, but it is totally devoid of imagination and gameplay. Even the most hardened gameplayers in the office had to admit defeat after a few goes - they were just falling asleep on the job!



The story is a usual 'zap the international terrorists' thing - but at the beginning you can pick one of three types of place to fly, each piloted by a different nationality of flyer. You've got your Japanese Shin-Kazama, Mickey Simon the American or Greig Gate from....Holland.

The age of the Euro-game has arrived boys! Each plane has different charactaristics that make you use different tactics, but you soon end up thinking to yourself, what's the point?

With all the technical wizadry at its fingertips, it seems astonishing that nice people like Capcom can come up with something as fingers down the throat as this. Better luck next time chaps.

FAXBOX

Worst CP System game to come out from Capcom yet - we want Strider II!!!

7

Graphics

Gameplay

Overall 5

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FIGHTING SOCCER

GAMES REVIEW!

Sounds like a winner doesn't it? Unfortunately, while the title promises so much, the game doesn't really deliver.

For a start, the game doesn't include any fighting. Dodgy translation from the Japanese, apparently. This, I have to say is a bit of a let down.

I was fully expecting a lot of "Climb player", "punch ref" options, or at the very least the ability to determine how high your tackles are. Alas, there's none of it. Fighting Soccer is simply a reasonable conversion of a pretty average footy game.

You're given a top down view of the pitch and all the players. There's not much colour (green pitch and shaded black players). The screen scrolls poorly, and the animation of the players is slow and jerky.

Obviously, the aim of the game is to stuff the ball into the opposition's onion bag as many times as possible before the end of the game.

In a sort of World Cup scenario, you play teams from around the globe, each with different strengths and weaknesses.

Since you can't control more than one player at time, you are forced to rely on the computer to guide the remaining men in your team into sensible pass-opportunity places. This is all very well, but the naff nature of the animation and action makes any really plans of strategy a little bit pie-in the sky, Brian.

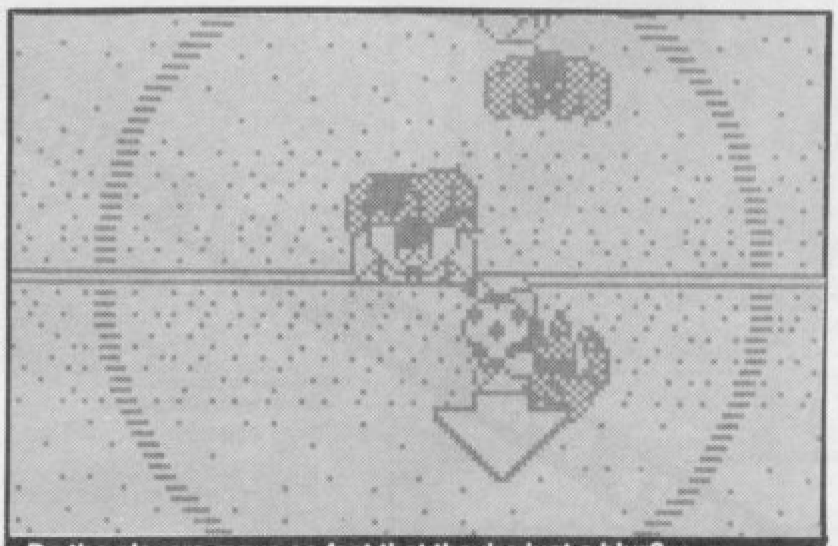
The opposing team seems to have a shooting advantage that I simply can't put down to my big match nerves, Saint. Once one of the other team has the ball at his feet, he pummels the goalie with the ball until the poor lad is so dazed he just lets the ball through.

An off-the-line clearance is a rare event.

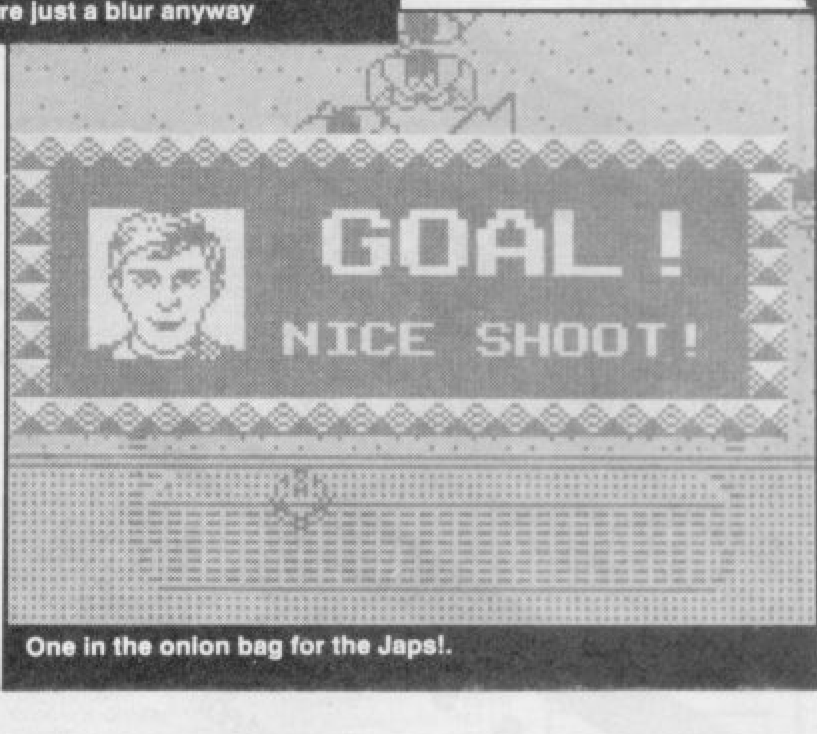
In fact, scoring goals isn't that tough. I found that the effort involved getting the ball and my players up the pitch far tougher than actually banging one in, John.

Probably the nicest programming touch crops up when you're jumping for a header. The players rise up from the pitch as they scramble for the ball.

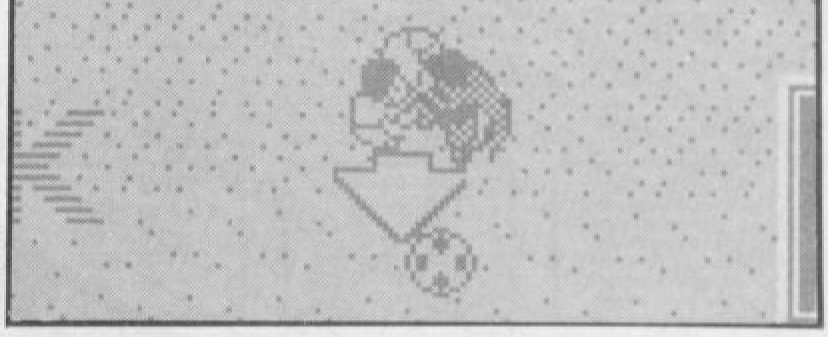
The only reason people play sports games in the arcades - and indeed at home- whether it's a soccer game or a bowling simulation, is the playability. On a home machine, you have to make a careful decision whether to concentrate on the pics or the action. Fighting Soccer falls resolutely between both stools, and smashes its teeth out in the process.



Do the players move so fast that they're just a blur? No. not at all. It's just that they are just a blur anyway



One in the onion bag for the Japs!.



FAX BOX

ARCADE REVIEW

Label: Activision Author: Spryte
Price: £8.95 Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: Various

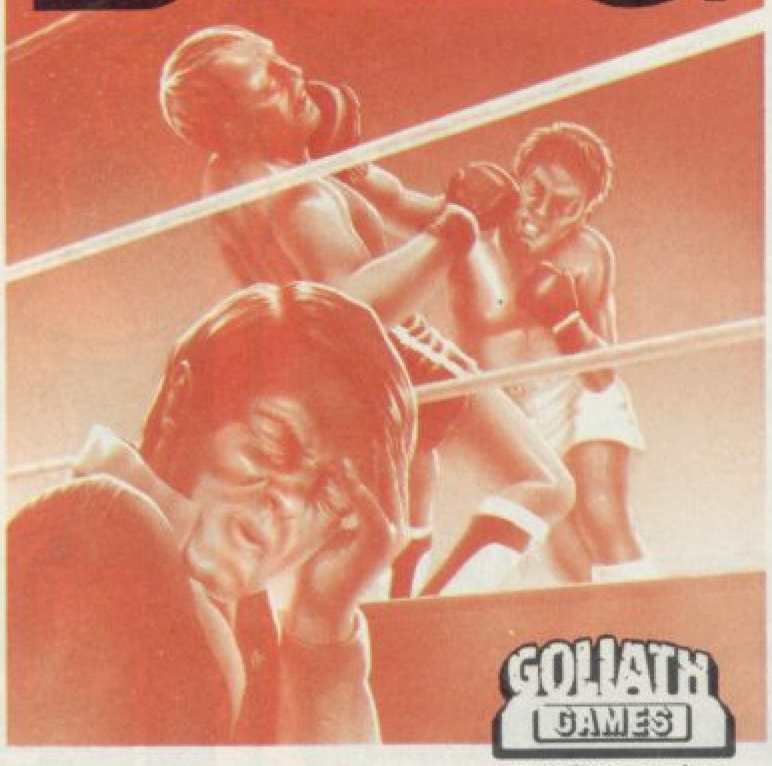
GRAPHICS	SOUND
65	66
55	57
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

Fairly wonky soccer sim. Nice name, nothing to back it up.

Reviewer: Jim Douglas

OVERALL 59

World Championship BOXING MANAGER



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BEWARE...

If you're looking for something easy or a joystick waggling punch up – look elsewhere this is the fight game with reality.

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PRECIN



The most utterly boring conversation in the world, or at least certainly in the same class as "my computer is better than yours " arguments, discussions of variations in Eastern European rolling stock and whether United are going to get promotion this year must be the perennial debate about different role playing systems.

Get yourself down to a fantasy convention and there'll be pixies galore gobbing venom at each other about how "Rune Master" has a better combat system than "Plonkers & Pixies" or something or other. Gits. Fact is, as long as you are having a good time playing the game that you are playing - who cares?

At one time or another, of course, everyone even vaguely interested in role-playing has played the Big Daddy of them all, **Dungeons and Dragons** - and judging by the number of entries we had for our TSR compo a couple of months back - quite a few of you wanted a copy of the second edition rules, which started to be published earlier this year with a new Players Handbook and Dungeon Masters' Guide.

This mammoth enterprise consisted of updating, adding, subtracting, reorganising and generally making the first edition rules (getting on a bit now) generally a bit luvverlier. Well now, the Monster Guide has had the same tidying up as the first two modules and it's called the **Monstrous Compendium** (Volumes 1 and 2). Volume One consists of a big loose leaf binder in which to keep your Monstrous Notes and details of around 200 monsters and variants to inhabit any campaign, along with introductionary material explaining how to interpret the info, tables for coming up with random monsters fo r chance encounters and advice on how to create your own monsters.

Each monster is given an A4 sheet of its own giving its vital stats (21 in all), a black and white illustration of the same, then copious notes detailing stuff like its modes of Combat, Habit/Society and Ecology - all of which try to put the monster in quesiton into perspective in the world as a whole.

Then you get your full colour dividers for....well...dividing one monstor type from another - and very pretty they are too. Then you get yer Monstrous Compendium Vol 2 which os about 200 more of the same, only no ring binder - as you add these to your previous lot. The extras here are a full index of the Vol 1 plus Vol 2, rules for creating NPC parties and loads more encounter tables to cover just about every situation you can think of and more fabby colour binders.

What does all this add up to? Around all the monsters you could ever usefully want in a campaign (AD&D or not) and more usefully, a whole host of background material for each species. Open the Compendium at random and if you were stuck for an idea about a campaign, you'd find something or other to set your imagination going.

I also particularly liked the way that the DM is guided towards trying to make the campaign 'realistic' - that is, making the encounters believeable within the framework of the world and the monsters react sensibly to a particular situation, according to their intelligence, alignment and inclination. Given that there is also room (indeed encouragement) for any DM to invent their own monsters to go along with the standard ones, the Monstrous Compendia (both of 'em) are a worthy upgrade to the AD&D 1st Edition and make a splendid accompanyment to the other 2nd Edition material. Nice one TSR. Availible from good shops all over the Multiverse, or alternatively is you cross TSR's collective palm with



NCT 19



silver at 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge, CB1 3LB they'll almost certainly do the rest. Are you listening Santa? Anyone out there play Talisman? Oh you know, the sort of role-playing board game where you are trying to find the Crown of Command before everyone else and so win the game? Remember? Well, fun 'though it was, just in case it's lying under the bed (along with your skateboard, flurescent boxer shorts and Batman Yoyo) Games Workshop have come up with an expansion kit to give it another lease of life and make it even more exciting and fab then ever before. What do you get for your money? Well, a nicely drawn add-on game board, which joins onto the original board where the city square was, lots of different sorts of new cards - some to add to the existing stacks, for new for goings on specifically in the City - and an extra few pages of rules that tell you what's what in the environs.



There are new character classes too - two that are started off at the beginning of the game, the Minotaur and the Valkyre and others being offices that can be bestowed upon you when in the Town. What does the City add to the original game? Well, unless otherwise stated, it acts as another part of the Outer Region of the game - it does certainly adds a "make or break" element to it and a bit of extra colour. Like a lot of cities you could mention, it's easy to borrow money and make your way upwards in the world - but it's equally easy to get throw in jail and end up sleeping underneith the arches. Or for that matter, dead.

Highly likely that, if you felt you had your money's worth out of the original, this expanison is going to satisfy. OK?

Finally for this month, slapped wrists for not mentioning, a couple of months back, a PBM called Beyond Gwaras. A development of a long running MJR Games game called Riders of Gwaras, BG takes you, well, beyond all that into Yshkar, an alien world rules by Dragon Kings - a race called Kargashis. A hand moderated role playing, PBM it's a bit different in that you can choose to be one of 20 race types at the start of the game. Examining the rulebook shows the BG to be quite complex and well thought out, presenting an interesting world view of a continent ruled by slave-driving amphibians. Worth a look, write to MJR games with an sae for more details. Start-up was 5 with 2 per go after that (garuenteed 1000 word processed words within 7 days) but write off first in case things have changed. Try MJR Games at 43 Cromwell Ave, Whalley Range, Manchester, M16. Until next month - keep making those saving throws.



TH



Greetings, mortals, I hope the summer weather saw you travelling to exotic places overseas, or were you content to stay in the UK and indulge in a spot of Sorceress spotting? Didn't find me did you?

Another person who hasn't been found is Henry Mueller (subtle link, eh?). The elusive scarlet Pimper-Mueller hasn't been seen by anyone, in heaven or hell, and his whereabouts remain a mystery to us all.

I hear rumours that one or two letters have been received by people, to the effect that Mr. Mueller is considering starting up another adventure club. Either this is somebody's idea of a joke, or Mr. Mueller really does mean to return to the adventure world. If that is the case, then it's an even bigger joke.

Don't think for one minute that the man will get any good publicity from me. Read on, gentle reader, read on, especially if the Mueller owes you money. The latest issue of Spellbreaker has arrived, for some reason sporting Batman on the issue, or order up to 12 months in advance, from 19 Napier Place, South Parks, Glenrothes, Fife KY6 1DX (cheques and postal orders payable to Spellbreaker).

I give you the address again for a good reason.

Tucked away among the hints and tips, adventure solutions, getting you started, and the rest, is a very interesting letter from a Mr. Allan Phillips. he wants to collect any information from people involved in the Mueller saga, especially those who are owed issues of the ACL magazine. Don't write to Allan though, write to the editor of Spellbreaker at the address just given.

The editor is a chap by the name of Mike Brailsford.

The information he requires from forgotten members of the Mueller adventure club is membership number, name how many issues owed, and proof of membership. Gather all this material together and bundle it off to the spellbreaking Mr. Brailsford, who will pass it on to Allan Phillips.

The hope is then to take the Mueller company to court, so if you've been involved in this sorry saga then start writing now. Hopefully, we'll see something happening soon. I shall endeavour to keep you informed. Brief mention for something else in Spellbreaker totally unconnected with the Mueller story, as is the rest of this column: I'm a Mueller-free zone form now on, Paul Avis has set up a Spectrum adventure swap club, and the address to write to for further details is 49 Hewitt Road, Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset BH15 4QB. Only originals will be accepted, so if you've got a dusty shelf full of old games lying around and you swish to swap them for new ones, the £1.25 per swap will transform ancient derelict games into modern smash hits. I don't mind publishing this sort of thing as long as it only involves original copies of games in their original packaging. Any hint of piracy and I'd happily pass on all details to the companies involved, you know me, but as long as everybody sticks to the real thing then there can't really be any harm. With so many games now relying on the packaging as an anti-piracy device in itself, it's no use taking a copy of the game without photocopying manuals and accompanying novellas, by which time you might as well have bought another copy of the game in the first place,.

FORGOTTEN CITY:

(from where we left off last time) d, push black, u, out, w, in, get grapes, out, se, in, get mask, out, ne, in, n, n, out, n, nw, nw, n, e, get painting, get idol, w, nw, exam fountain, look, get coins, ne, ne e (wait until shop opens), in, sell idol, sell painting, out, e, n, e, in, buy cutters, out, w, s, e, in, buy gloves, out, e, in, push purple, w, n, give grapes, sw, out, nw, w, w, s, e, e, s, se, e, e, s, pull lever, n, w, w, w, nw, in, push orange, se, e, e, n, e, give metal, w, s, s, s, w, w, in, buy cyanide, out, w, n, n, n, w, w, w, w, n, cut fence, n, get muffs, wear muffs, s, w, w, w, w, se, e, e, n, e, pay manager, w, s, w, w, nw, in, push orange, e, s, in, s, exam robot, turn dial, u, nw, exam statuette, turn head, n, get coins, exam desk, look, get card, s, se, d, n, out, n, w, in, push purple, n, w, w, n, e, e, ne, pay robot, in, n, se, insert card, push orange, look, get orangeade, pour cyanide, drop bottle, nw, s, out, sw, w, w, s, s, e, e, s, s, w, w, in, buy emitter, out, e, e, n, n, n, w, w, n, n, w, give cocktail, n, w, open trapdoor, wear gloves, cut wire, e, n ... so near and yet so far!

SECRET OF LITTLE HODCOMBE:

(from where we left off last time) climb wall, search debris, get phial, d, u, w, climb ladder, s, move clock, feel floor, throw rope, feel wall, pull lever, n, feel altar, get book, open book, read book, e, fill phial, w, s, s, e, e, dig, look, get rib, out, w, w, w, move gargoyle, climb rope, s, throw phial, s, w, pull panel, open pouch, look, get gold key, unlock chest, exam jar, break jar, get heart, e, e, push north, w, n, get steel key, unlock door, s, pierce heart, w, throw heart ... finished!

HE SORCERESS

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```
An elegant, well-furnished
dining room.
In the centre of the room is a
large Victorian table, with six
chairs placed orderly around
its sides.
A grandfather clock stands in
the corner, with silent chimes
and motionless hands. On the far
wall hangs an ornate mirror.
Doors are to the west, north and
south.

EXAMINE MIRROR
I can see my reflection -
very handsome!

I can't go around starkers!
I'm off back to my bedroom!
```

So, originals rule, and good luck to Paul Avis. On with the news. You must have seen adverts for telephone numbers of the 0898 variety, where they tell you that the cost is 25 pence per minute off peak and 38 pence per minute peak rate.

Why do they always tell you the price? They have to, by law, so I've just done it. This is not a hack and slay dungeons and dragons game, which I can't understand anyone playing unless they have the wealth of Croesus, but it's the Guiding Light Adventure Helpline, on 0898 338 933. I've told you the price so don't forget it. Yes, a telephone helpline, set up by Jackie Wright and hubby, operating from 12 to 8 o'clock, seven days a week.

On Mondays and Wednesdays there is GAC help as well, from Sandra Sharkey, she of Shymer fame.

Solutions to thousands of adventures are there if you want to ring up and are completely stuck in a game. Outside of the hours mentioned they run competitions and things, all free to enter, it says here, plus a monthly draw as well. A good idea, it seems to me, so after you've gone north and hit a brick wall you can let your fingers do the walking. Just remember the price of the call, that's all. Last, but by no means least, we come to a new adventure game. It's a Quilled adventure called Puzzled!, written by two people know as T. Marsh and J. Skinner.

Confusingly, my introduction to this game came from another person altogether, one who mighty be familiar to Sorceress readers (although you'll have to stretch your mind back two years). That person is Terry Taylor, and the game we gave a good review to was The Labours Of Hercules.

Anyway, on to the present. Tony Marsh is the person to write to if you want a copy, which will cost you the grand sum of £1.99. Tony lives at 48 Clifton Road, Regents Park, Southampton SO1 4GX. He also provides a complete solution for a further pound, if you get hopelessly and completely stuck. Ninety location cover the three section of the game, and your goal is to complete a rather peculiar jigsaw. All the usual Quilled





stuff is there, shortened inputs and all that, and on the way (in section two) you'll discover why the cover features those three characters from the Wizard of Oz known as the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and the Scarecrow. Something to do with the yellow brick road, I shall tell you no more. Aargh! Run out of space! The curse of having just two pages. Byee!

```
I'm in my bedroom.
I can see my old armchair, all
my personal belongings, and the
familiar mess in which the room
is usually left.

INV

Unacceptable!

INVENTORY

Possessions:-
A WATCH.(worn)
A PAIR OF DAMP PYJAMAS.(worn)

SNIFF PYJAMAS

The IMPOSSIBLE I'll do at once -
MIRACLES take a bit longer!!
```

WITTS END

THE PROSPECTOR:

Light the lantern at the fire in the log cabin and go into the mine to get the ladder. Take the ladder to the hut and lean it against the wall. Leave the lantern behind and climb up the ladder to the roof, Open the window and go down into the hut. Get the dynamite and break open the crate with the iron bar to get a fuse. Close the crate so you can stand on it to get back through the window, Climb down the ladder, get the land=tern and the ladder, and return to the mine. Back in the mine, lean the ladder, and climb up to the ledge and then to the rock face. Attach the fuse to the dynamite and insert it into the hole in the rock face. Get the end of the fuse and get out of the mine. Light the end of the fuse with the lantern and wait for the explosion.

BLACK KNIGHT:

You will need the ladder to climb up through the hole in the ceiling in the cloisters, to get the incense from the store room. In the chapter hose, examine the shelf to find the scroll. At the entrance to the cave, to exorcise the evil spirits, burn the incense, ring the bell, read the scroll and wave the Bible. Carry the horseshoe to pass the demon. Give the mead to warlock. Read the spellbook in the dark cave, then put the mistletoe in the cauldron to create a

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SPHERICAL



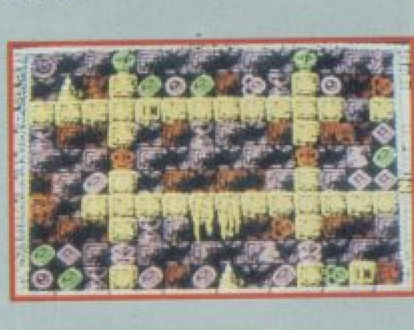
Spherical is like a cross between Manic Miner and Mousetrap. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. It involves a wizard (or two) pegging around a huge number of screens, constructing more and more clever ways to steer the path of a rolling ball into a strategically placed box at the bottom of the screen.

Let me explain. Each screen features a counter. The second the screen appears, the counter will, er, begin to count down. When it reaches zero, a big ball somewhere in the top region of the screen will be released from its starting position and will fall or roll - depending on its surroundings - down the screen. It's essential to use this lead time effectively. While the easy, early screens will allow you to dither around a bit, and the ball will roll easily no matter what you do, the later levels will put a sneaky trap right in front of the ball and it you're not quick enough to get it, you're stuffed.

Affecting the descent of the ball is far from complicated, but it can be bloody difficult. Each wizard has at his disposal an infinite number of building blocks. He can put them anywhere except immediately below him. The trick is to set the blocks in a pattern so as to allow the ball either a complete run into the target box or set up a series of containment areas and gradually channel the ball the right way.

This all sounds a bit heavy going and dull, doesn't it? Well, it's not as bad as all that. It certainly has the appeal of puzzley things. Mind you, it's the sort of appeal that can fade pretty sharpish.

Spherical looks pretty poor for the first twenty screens or so, comprising pretty tiny sprites and not an abundance of swooshy animation. While there is colour all around, nothing seems especially well drawn.



Later on, however, the graphics seem to have come from another dimension entirely. There are huge dragons and beasts and statues and structures; all beautifully drawn and tricky to negotiate.

Remember the Mirrorsoft game. Tetris? Well, it's got exactly the same grab factor as that.

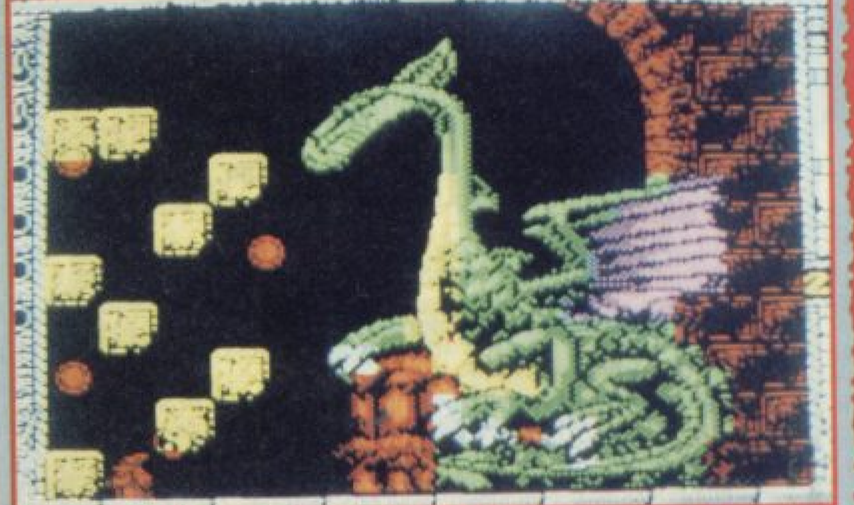
There are clusters of jewels hanging in the air. Each awards you bonus points.

Movement around the screen involves bouncing off blocks (whether already in position or laid by yourself).



"Welcome to my parlour" Ooer, this could be s sticky situation.

And that's your lot. The further you get, the more outrageously tricky the screen layouts become and the tougher it is to stop the ball from becoming throroughly trapped in a crevice. If you're desperately keen on action-puzzle solving, then this is one for you. If you're after anything else, forget it.



Whoops! You'll not get around this beastie easily 'cos it's immense, no doubt like his fuel bills.



Balls, balls, balls but what can you do with 'em eh? These superb backdrops are typical of the later stages.

ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

Label: Rainbow Arts Author: Probe
Price: £8.95 Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: Various

GRAPHICS	SOUND
65	66
68	60
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

"Action" Puzzling. Flawed but interesting.

Reviewer: [signature]

OVERALL **64**

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

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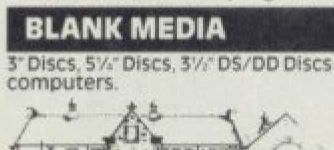
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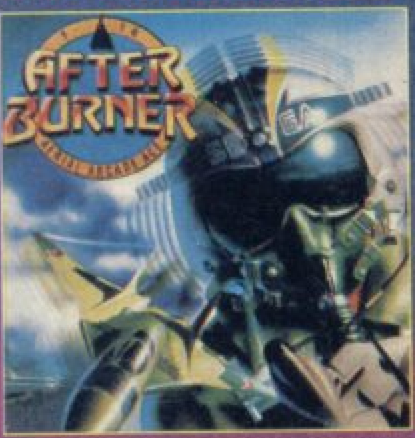
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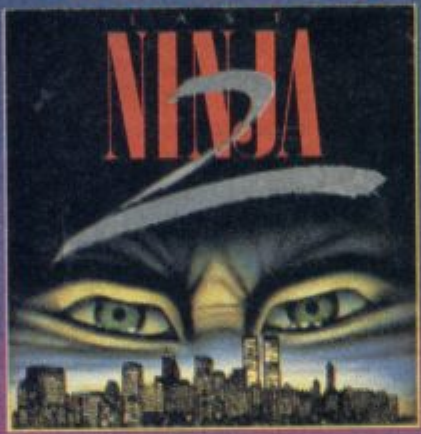
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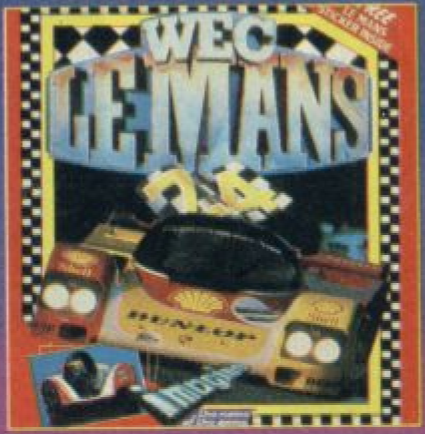
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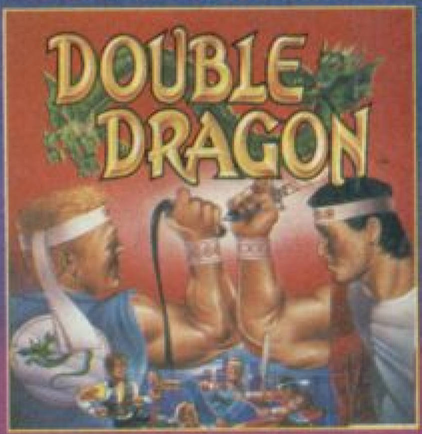
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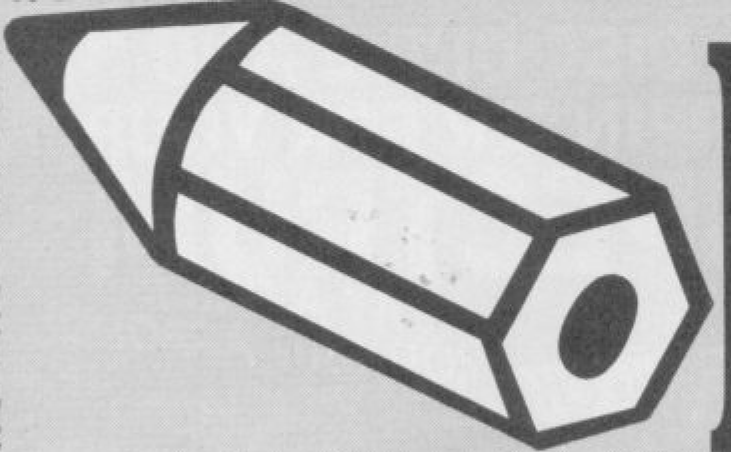
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- SEGA ☐
- SPECTRUM ☐
- OTHER (PLEASE STATE):

WHAT MACHINE (IF ANY) ARE YOU INTENDING TO BUY IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS

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- ATARI ST ☐
- C64 ☐
- MEGADRIVE ☐
- NINTENDO ☐
- PC COMPATIBLE ☐
- PC ENGINE ☐
- SEGA ☐
- SPECTRUM ☐
- OTHER (PLEASE STATE)

....

HOW MUCH DO YOU SPEND ON COMPUTER GAMES PER WEEK

- 1-5 ☐
- 6-10 ☐
- 10-15 ☐
- 15-25 ☐
- 25+ ☐

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- NEXT MONTH ....
- TIPS ....
- PREVIEWS ....
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- OUTLANDS ....

IS THE TEXT IN THE REVIEW

- TOO LONG ☐
- TOO SHORT ☐
- JUST RIGHT ☐

DO YOU AGREE WITH Sinclair User REVIEW MARKS

- OFTEN ☐
- MOST OF THE TIME ☐
- NEVER ☐

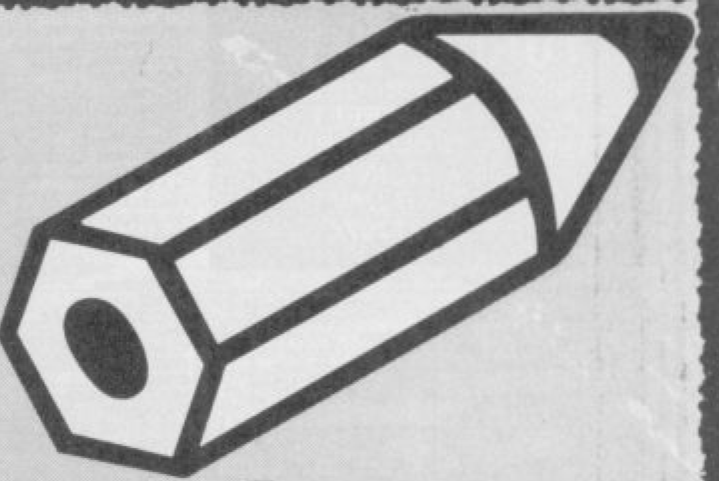
ARE THE SCREEN SHOTS

- TOO FEW ☐
- TOO MANY ☐
- JUST RIGHT ☐

HAS THE MAGAZINE NOTICABLY IMPROVED OVER THE LAST SIX MONTHS?

- YES ☐
- NO ☐

THE READY!



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YES ☐
NO ☐

IS THE RATING SYSTEM

GOOD ☐
BAD ☐
REASONABLE ☐

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE OTHER RATINGS?
IF YES, WHAT
....
....

ARE THERE ANY CHANGES YOU'D LIKE TO SEE MADE TO THE REVIEWS
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ARE Sinclair User COVERS

GREAT ☐
ALRIGHT ☐
BAD ☐

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YES ☐
NO ☐

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YES ☐
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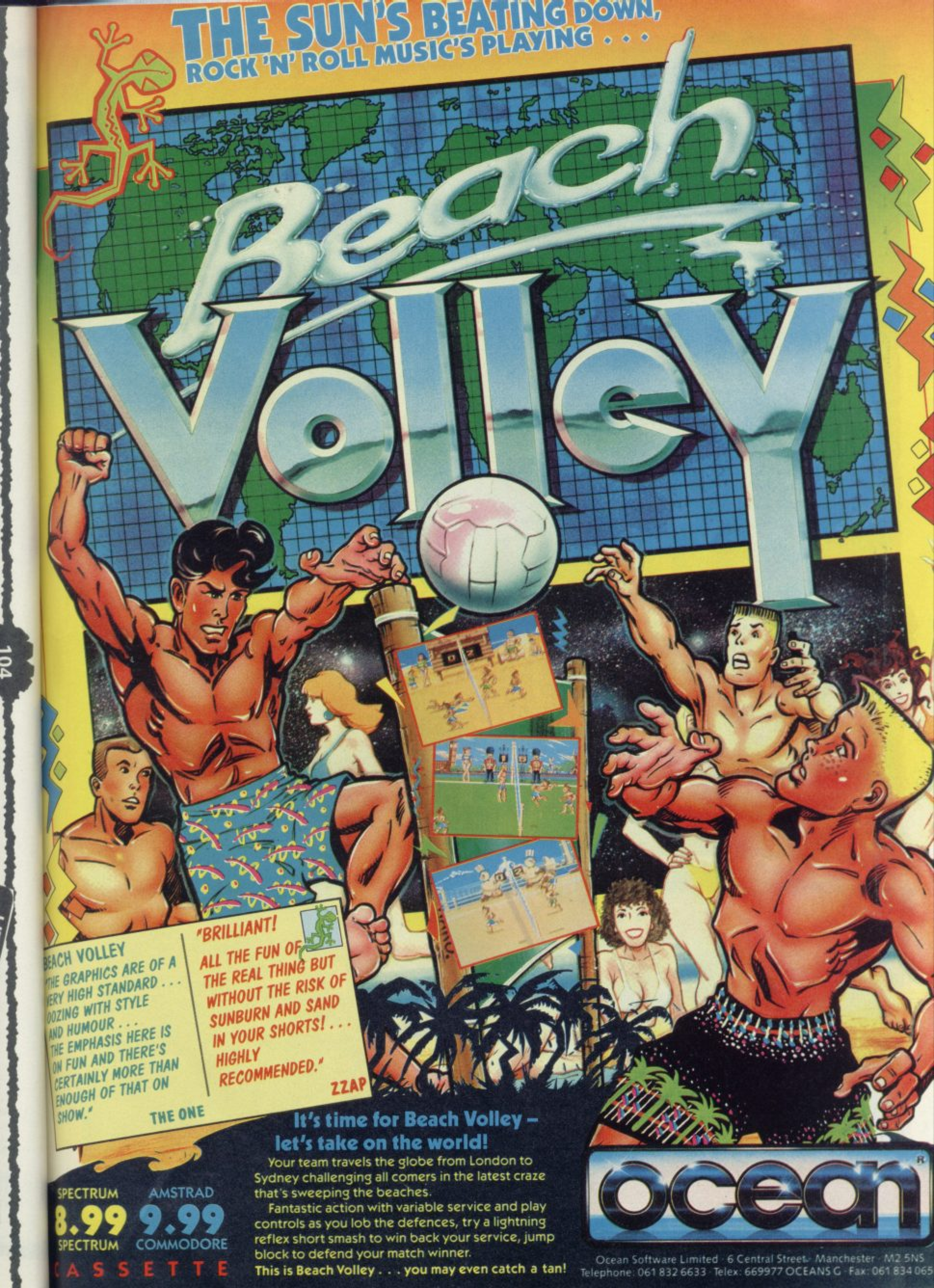
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AFTER THE WAR

I'm glad I didn't have to fight in the Spanish civil war. If the average Spaniard is hard enough to get through *After the War*, I wouldn't want to tangle with any of them.

It seems to be a factor of Spanish games, and especially the stuff from Dinamic that the playability has been tweaked to the very peak of difficulty. I'm not talking about a few extra obstacles you've got to overcome. Oh no. Playing After the War is more like a set of carefully timed keypresses at precise screen positions than actually playing a game.

The first level is like Target Renegade on steroids. Huge sprites populate a detailed (and therefore confusing) post apocalyptic backdrop. Clad in regulation issue leather jacket and motorcycle boots, you're heading east (well, toward the right hand side of the scrolling screen) and you ain't gonna let nuthin' get in your way.

At least, that's the plan. The reality for me, a weedy Anglo Saxon was a right good hammering every time.

The first wave of the bad guys are easy enough after a little practise. Ducking down and punching them in the crotch seems to be the best policy.

If only it was that simple. About half way through the level, the thugs have increased punchability, and take at least two good punches or kicks before they keel over. On top of this, the sneaky swine are lobbing sticks of dynamite at you from windows. If you're within a certain radius when it goes off, you can kiss goodbye to your legs. The hilarity of the "Oh, I've been killed again. I really should have been one pixel further to the right" incidents began to wear thin pretty quickly.

And just when you've got the hang of dodging the dynamite and socking the other boys, you have to fight Mr Big. Well, Mr Bloody Enormous actually. He nearly touches the top of the screen and is even harder than Hard Tim McNoonan after twenty cans of Superlager and a 5-0 defeat for Palace. You can kick and punch and duck and bob for all you're worth, and he simply grabs you by the hair and pummels your face in. It's hardly cricket.

The second level (which I would never have seen were it not for a cheat poke) is a much more enjoyable affair.

You're tooled up with a mega machine-gun and an apparently infinite supply of ammo. Deeper into the enemy sector, life becomes tougher than before, but now you've got the equipment to give you a fighting chance.

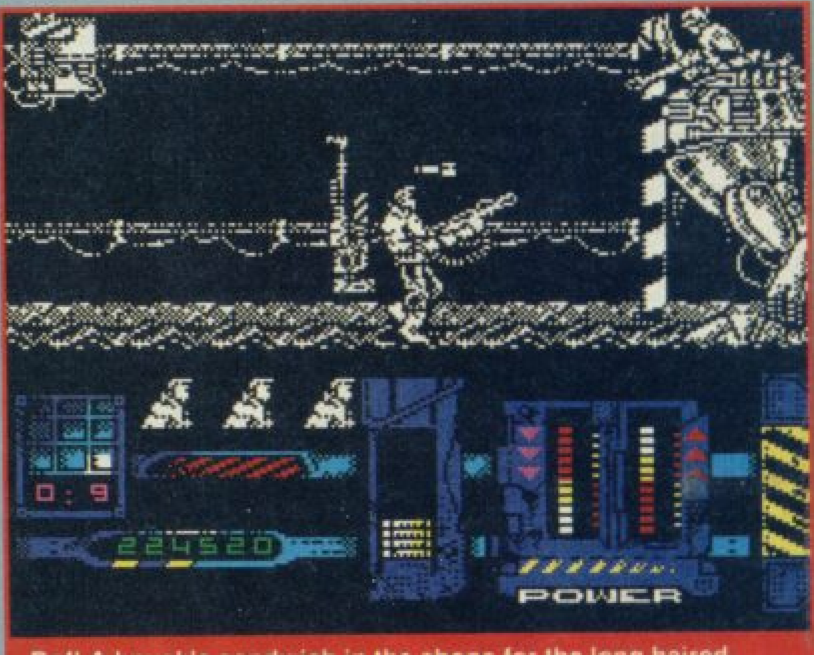
Hovvering gun turrets swoop out of the sky and shoot at you. Stationary laser ports zap you when you pass, and mysterious tracking-grenades explode when you need it least.

You can run left and right and raise your gun through steps of 90 degrees, blasting away with ultra-rapid fire the whole time.

Unfortunately, you don't get a moment's peace to plug the machinery, as you're assaulted by hordes of bad guys with rocket launchers and bullet proof suits. You need to hit them with a clean twenty shots before they die.

After a few screens progress, you'll find yourself confronted with a huge mechanoid. One looks like ED 209 from Robocop. These are even more tuff than the rest of the enemy forces, and they bombard you with rockets and machine gun fire.
After the War is, in places, both graphically fab and wonky. The playability is definitely there, but it's simply too hard. That's the end of it.

If only the programmers would ease up on their rabid determination to make their games impossible, they could be onto a winner



Bof! A knuckle sandwich in the chops for the long haired bleeder with the big chest.!



Come on then, big ears! I'll take you and your glorified zimmer frame to the cleaners!

ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

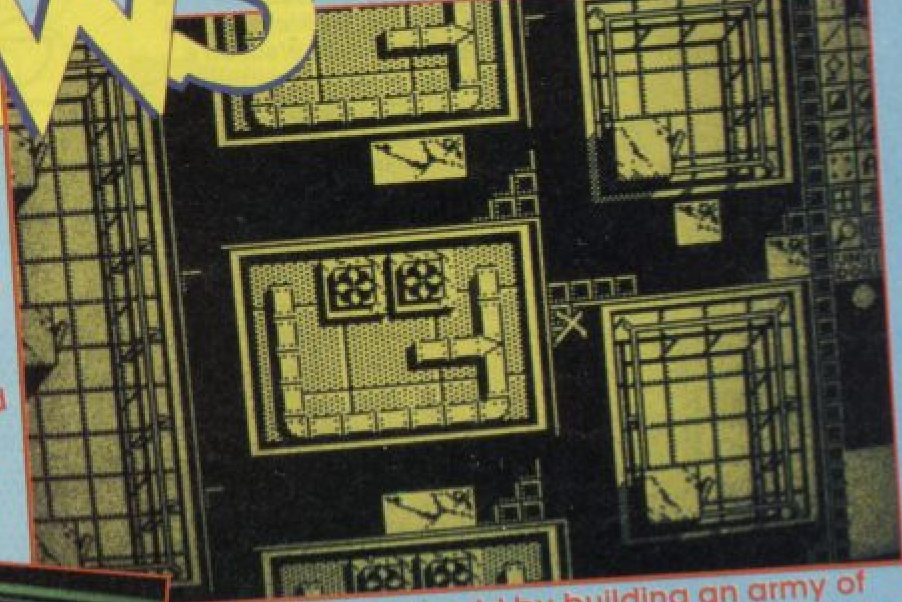
As hard as a very hard thing. Indeed. Ooer.

Label: Dinamic Author: In-House Price: £8.95 Memory: 48K/128K Joystick: Various

Reviewer: Graham Taylor

GRAPHICS	SOUND	PLAYABILITY	LASTABILITY	OVERALL
70		65	68	69

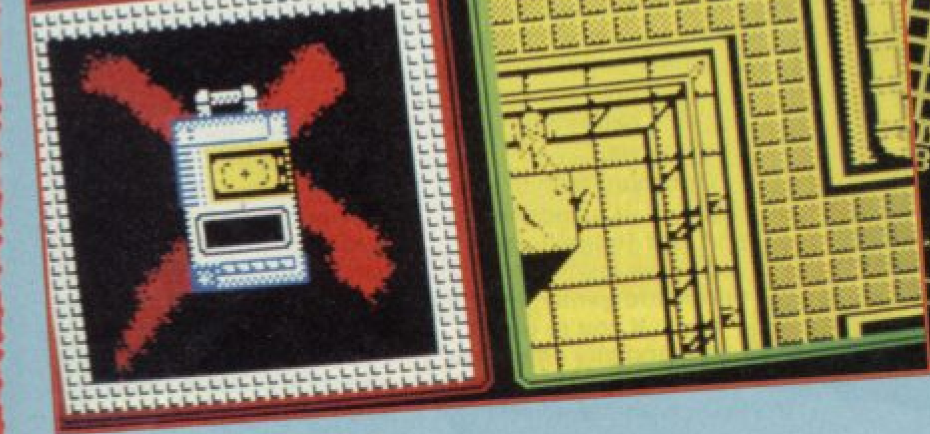
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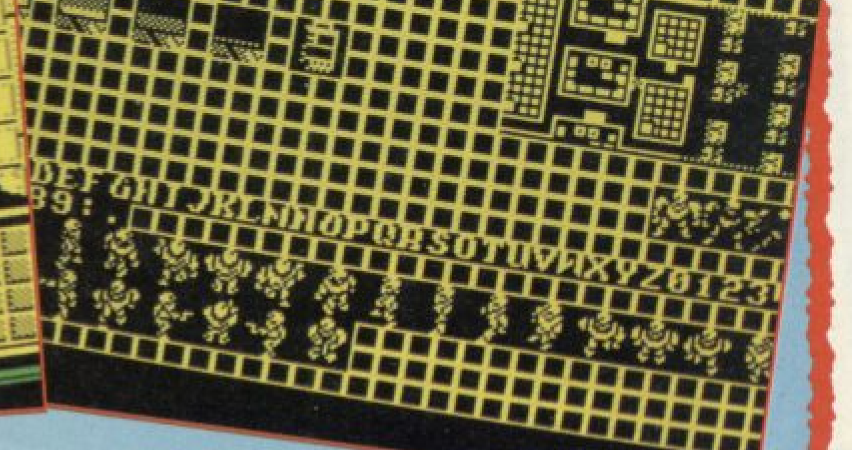


No doubt you've all seen SEGA's arcade game CRACKDOWN but did you know that it's soon to be released on the Spectrum? No, well *US Gold* are currently beavering away to get the finished version of the game into the shops for around February. What's the plot? Well Dr K is trying to take over the world by building an army of Replicants and the U.N. have employed two gun toting agents to destroy him. Well we've got the screen shots and we got 'em first so you'll just have to take your SU around to your less intelligent magazine buying friend's houses and show them just how brilliant the graphics are. And while you're there show them how many different stages of amination there are in the game. Show them the qulaity of the graphics and tell them how you can play two players completely independently of each other as you wander around the levels planting bombs at key locations - destroying Dr K's dreams of owning the world (Yea! Right on! No balding fascist is taking over while I've got life in my underpants!) End of Chat. Eat the graphics.



CRACKDOWN





GAMES REVIEW!

STUNT Ra

You're a futuristic cross between Nigel Mansell and Mad Max, driving for kicks on the road to oblivion. Well, on a number of assorted circuits of oblivion in fact.

Yup. In the deserted nowhereland of tomorrow motorsport has turned decidedly mental. Hod rods have been cross-bred with tractors and formula one cars and the result is more like an armour-plated rocket on wheels than anything else.

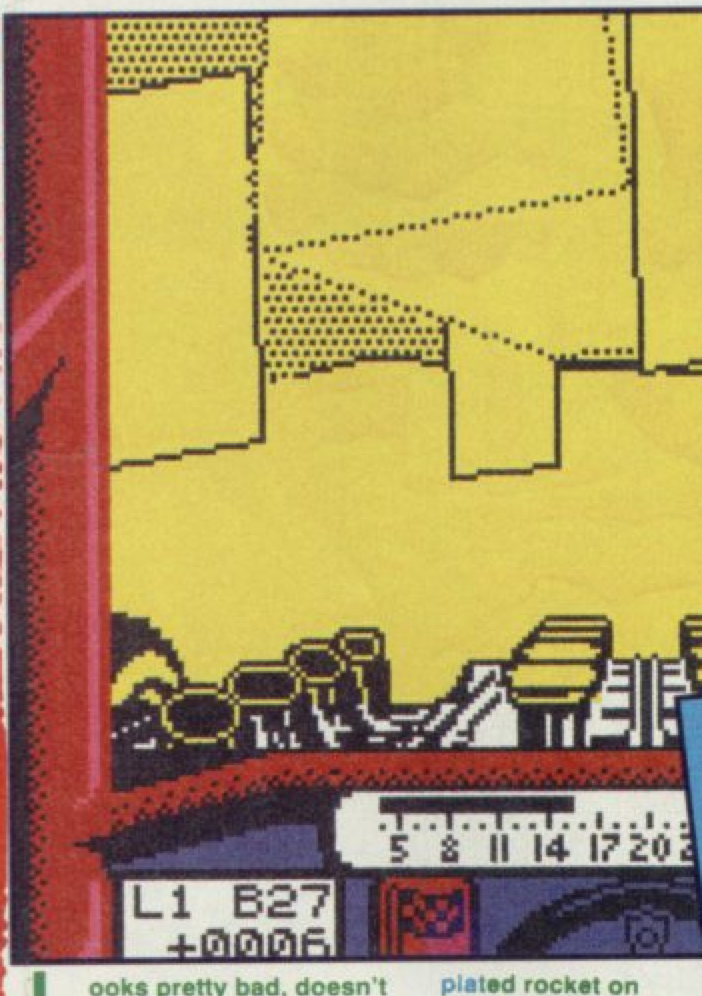
There's a wealth of options to investigate before you have to brave the rigours of a full blown race with one of the computer controlled psychotic opponents. For a start you can take a leisurely (?) practise drive through the courses to get a feel of the curves, bumps and jumps. And if you're not barmy, you'll want to use every last second of practise time available perfecting your driving style.

Once you're in a race situation, it's goggles on and foot to the floor. A big crane lowers you - none too gently onto the track. If you're going to stand any chance in the race, you'd best hit the track with the wheels spinning. Like any decent motor, your car can be steered left and right. It's got no gears, but a stonking great turbo charger instead. Faster or faster still?

Chances are that your opponent, Road Hog, Bully Boy (ooer) or any of the other funnily named drivers will manage to edge ahead on the first straight. Now the game becomes a test of nerve.

Holding down the turbo button, you scream into the first corner and smash the front of the car on the camber. The hairline fracture along the top of your roll bar extends from left to right, indicating the amount of knocks your car has taken. If it gets all the way across, you've had it.

Gaining on the other guy, there's no sense trying to ease gently in front of him. Just stamp on the gas and barge him out of the way. The little flag at the bottom of the screen goes green to indicate you're in the lead just as you hit that little concealed bump and plunge off the track down to earth. That's the end of your race.

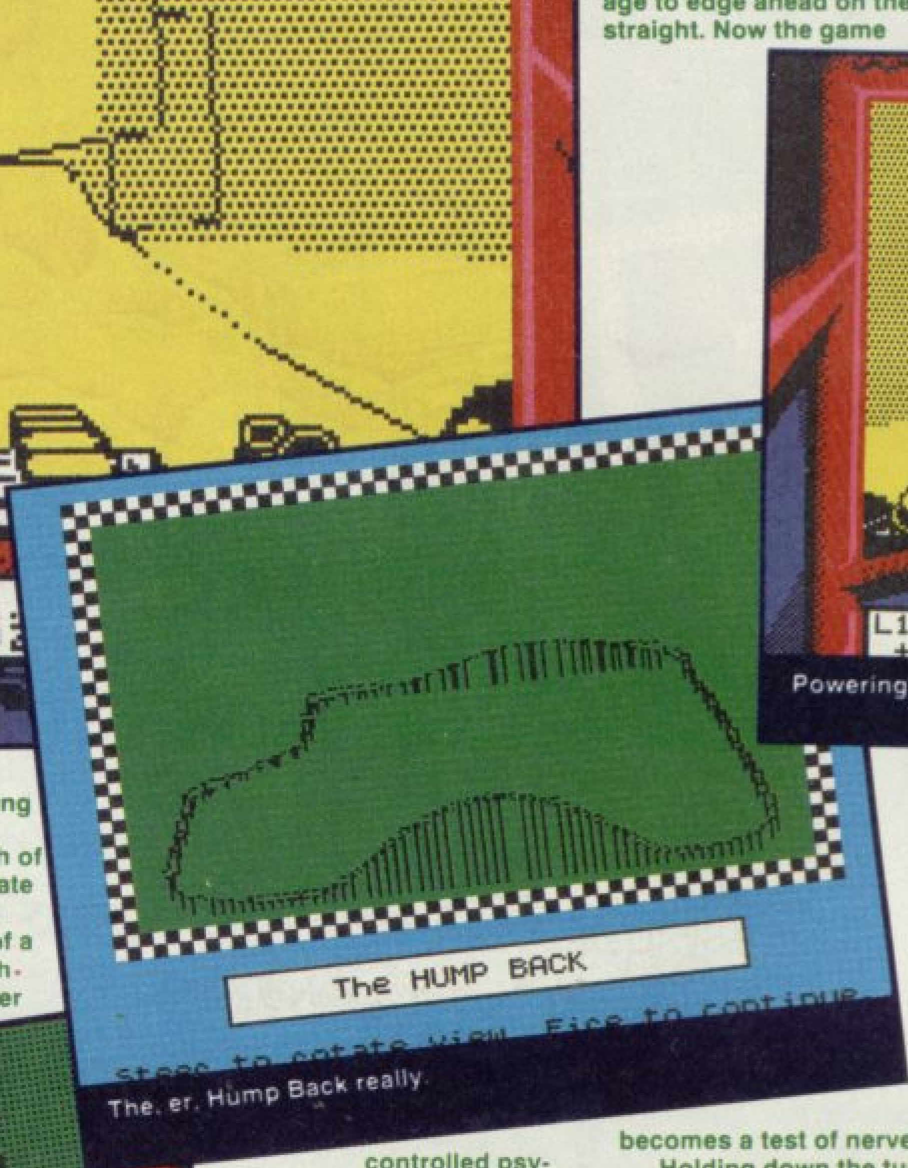


Looks pretty bad, doesn't it? Wire frame graphics have never been much of a winner on the Spec, especially when they're supposed to move with amazing speed etc.

Well you shouldn't be such a Mr Mopey, should you? Stunt Car racer is a whopper feast of motor excitement.



Powering up the straight



The, er, Hump Back really.



Are you ready? Are you steady? No - you're scared out of your wits and being swung about in the air

CAR ...acer

Unlike loads of race games, you can get yourself back on the track if you're lucky. A momentry lapse of concentration can leave you skidding along the edge of the elevated platforms, but good luck and brave steering can sometimes save the day.

The wire frame graphics shift at a respectable pace, and though the step-size is sometimes a bit silly, there's a definite feeling of high octane excitement.



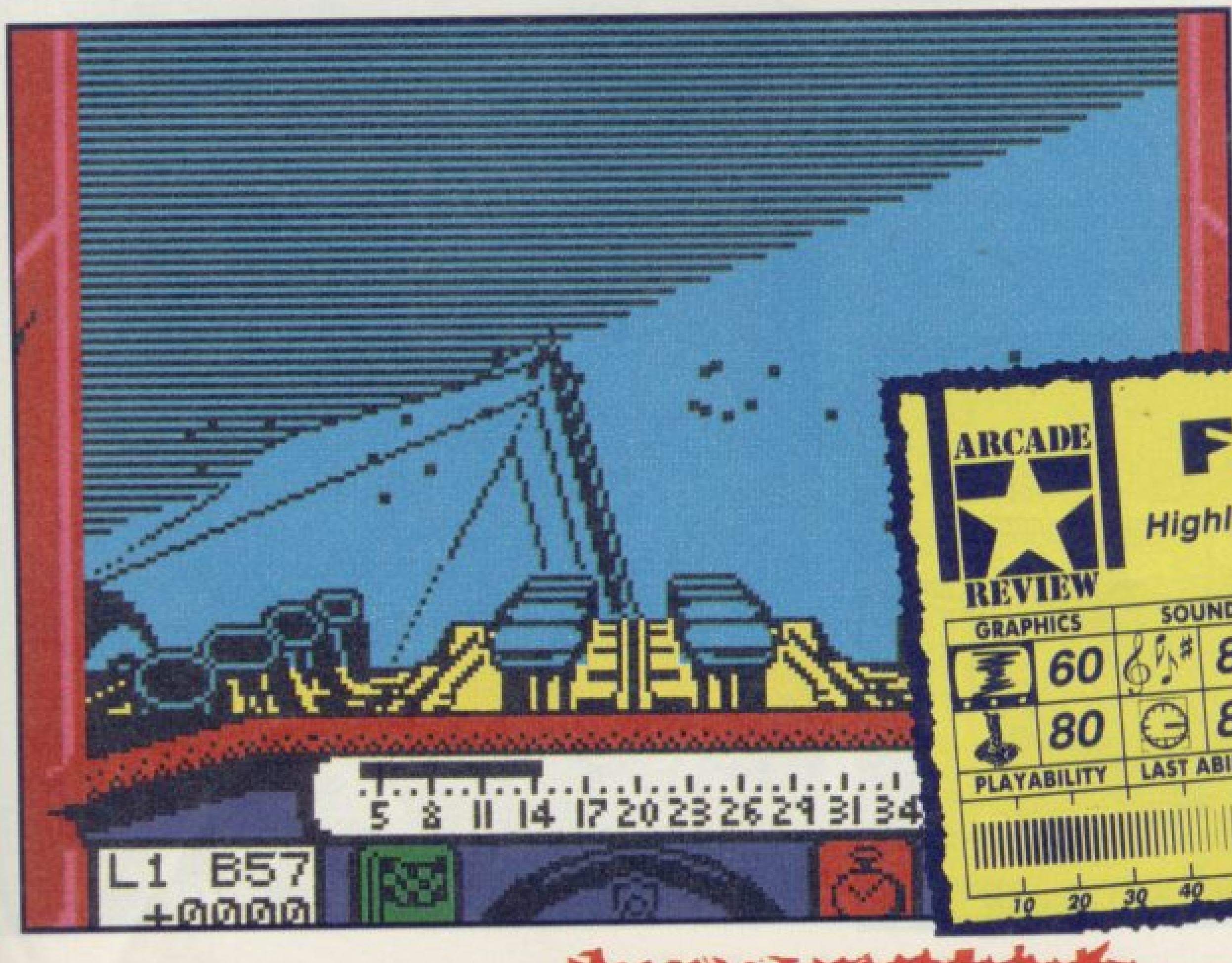
AND HE'S GOING TO BARGE PAST ON THE BEND!



AND NOW SURELY HE MUST CATCH HIM!



...ight of the tail of the bad guy.



HINTS AND TIPS

1: Keep yourself on the track at all times. Crashing is a bad thing.
2: When the other guy manages to get ahead of you, try to ambush him through one of the corners and barge him over the top of the track.
3: Don't use the turbocharger then you're going over the brow of a hill - you'll find yourself airborne. When you're wheels aren't on the track, you're slowing down. It may be very flash, but it won't win you the race.

4: Always drive at full tilt into the corners. The damage that you have to withstand won't be enough to break the motor providing you don't crash. You'll also get round faster!

FAX BOX

ARCADE REVIEW

Highly stylish mega road race.

Label: *Micro Style* Author: *Geoff Crammond* Price: *£8.95* Memory: *48K/128K* Joystick: *Various*
Reviewer: [signature]

GRAPHICS	SOUND
60	80
80	85
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

OVERALL 80

MY

Oh yes. This is the stuff that makes fab games. A sweeping epic taking place through different eras and continents. A chronicle of one man's struggle against astounding odds. Phew! What a scorcher.

It sounds like the intro to a million mediocre adventure games, doesn't it? Thankfully, Myth has got more action per second than any sweeping epics I've ever seen.



Myth is a joy to look at. The tiny graphics are so well animated it's almost like watching a little cartoon. It makes a welcome relief from the flickering megasprites of most exploration affairs of late.

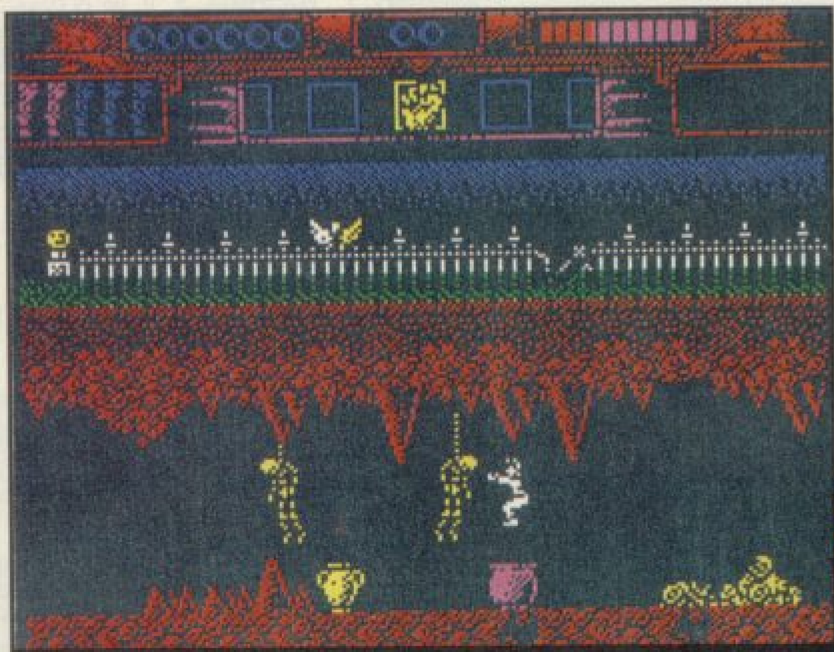
Probably the most important aspect of "big game" feel is that the environment you find yourself exploring feels MASSIVE. There's not much mystery when you know that the whole game world is only two screens by three deep.

That's where *Myth* beats others of its type hands down. It can be a real challenge simply getting from one side of the screen to the other.

The object of the game is to bounce yourself through different ages (Greek mythology, Norse etc) righting all the dodgy business that went on. If you're successful, you'll end up with a much happier future world. If you goof, well, it hardly bears thinking about.

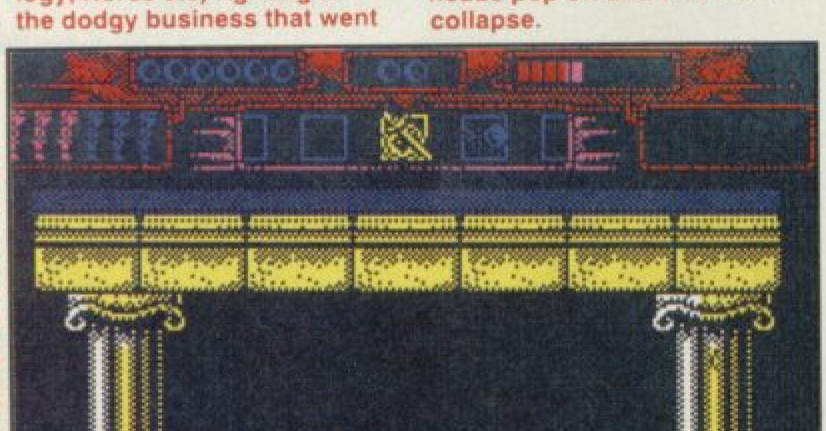
First stop on the trip is Hell (good to start on an up-note, eh?) You stand in the ruddy, dusty passages of a subworld littered with swinging skeletons and broken bodies. No time to waste. Best check out the surroundings.

Hell is a pretty depressing place actually, on top of the skeletons



Allez ooop! Our intrepid hero can jump tall cooking pots in a single bound

hanging from the ceilings, Ray Harryhausen style fighting bone-men leap out of the ground and attack you. This is the stuff! Laying into them with fists and feet (the control of your character is fab - more in a sec), the skeletons recoil with each blow, and eventually their heads pop off and their ribs collapse.



The controls offer a great deal of freedom; you can jump up, hop, squat, punch, kick etc. Also, you can pick up any objects that are lying on the deck. Virtually everything can be used at some stage in the game.

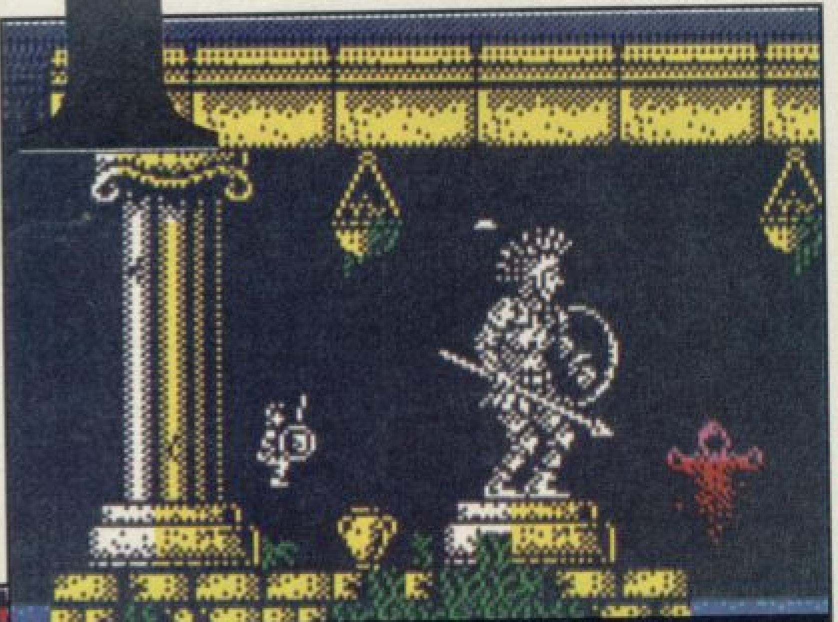
The most common items you'll discover in the first level are fireballs. These can be used to knock down the teleport icons. When you've got enough, you'll be beamed to the next time zone.

My favourite stage is the blue section, populated by horrible gargoyles and the Medusa. Here nasty green drops of slime fall from the cavernous



TH


Wallop! Take *that!*


The guy with the spear looks like he neheds sorting out.

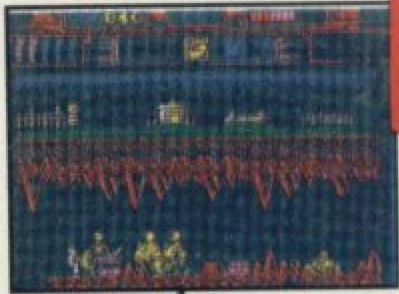


roofs. Armed with your trusty sword and shield, you've got to jump across yawning chasms from pillar to pillar, making slow but steady progress towards the ghastly grimmy herself. With every step closer you get, she'll spit more venom at you, and you've got to perfectly time your moves of jumping and raising the shield in order to survive.

Each level comprises a major feat that must be achieved, too. There are huge monsters that need killing, a medusa that needs beheading and Greek gods that need a stern talking to.

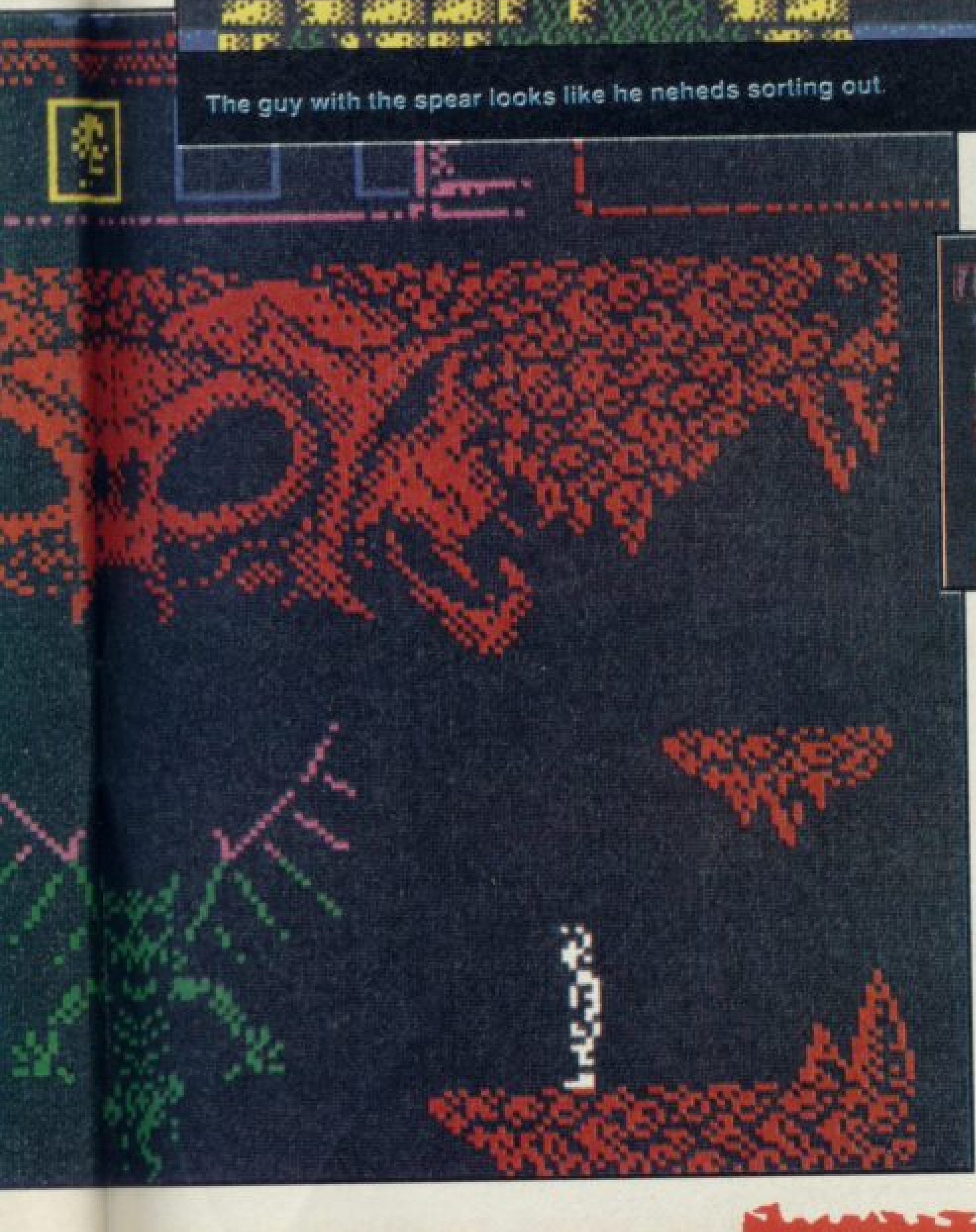
The graphics are fantastic throughout. The animation is simply superb. Because the figures are small, they can glide around the screens and each character can have a decent set of animations. When you jump, it really looks like a jump, and when you hit the ground, your legs bend.

These are the touches that really make Myth stand out from the crowd.





SINCLAIR USER CLASSIC



ARCADE REVIEW

FAX BOX

Simply fantastic exploration outing. Marvellous.

GRAPHICS	SOUND
95	65
89	89
PLAYABILITY	LAST ABILITY

Label: System 3 Author: In House Price: £8.95 Memory: 48K/128K Joystick: Various

Reviewer:

OVERALL **93**

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- The Ram Turbo has long been recognised as the best joystick interface ever devised for the Spectrum. The Quickshot II has sold over 15 million world wide!! Put the two together & you have got the best combination possible - add a free copy of 'Supersprint' from Activision & you can't get a better deal!!
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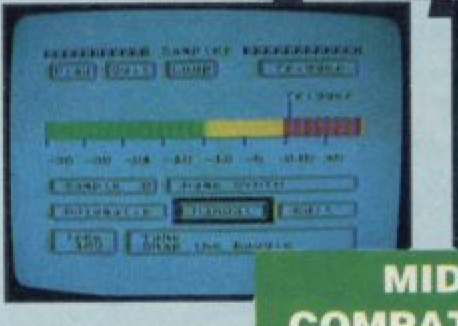
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THE BEST MUSIC PACKAGES FOR THE SPECTRUM - BAR NONE!!



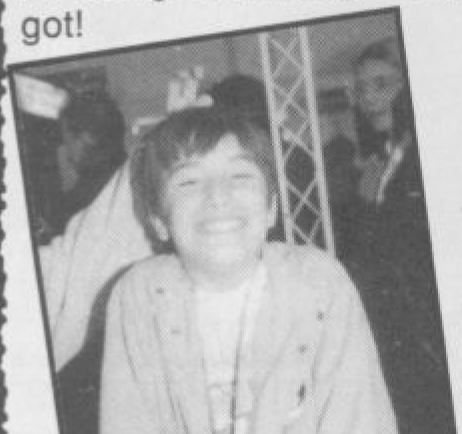
UGLY MUGS OR WOT?

Remember we asked you to look out for cuddly Uncle Chris with his camera at the PC show? Well you found him didn't you? And some very offensive faces you pulled at him too - cor, pass the spew bag. The creepiest face was chosen by Big Al Skeat herself, but she felt the rest of you should get a look in too.

A wodge of software goes to the winner, Stuart "Skeletor" Reed of Godmanchester in Cambridgeshire for being the biggest monst' of them all, and the rest of you get nothing but you're very own face on this page because you're all too ugly wugly for words (not true, we love you all really, oh yes we do - everyone at SU).

Also we thought you'd like to see a piccy of Mark Edwards because he was the smarty-bottom who won our Hypercard compo at the show. I'm sure you didn't, but it'll make Mark and his Mum happy, awright Mark, how you doing matey?

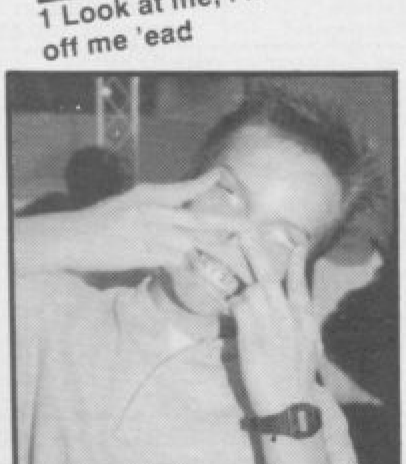
Eeek! Mr Horrid! Congratulations to Stuart Reed for being the most ghastly looking reader we've got!



1 Look at me, I'm completely off me 'ead



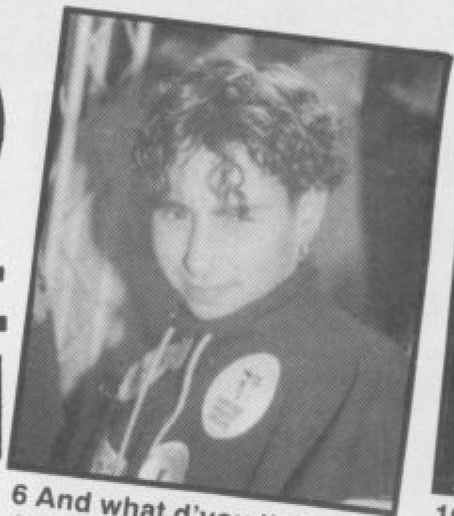
3 We're so ruddy hunky, so up yer bum 4 mmph mmph I wanna be sick Mum



2 If the wind changes dear, you'll be sorry



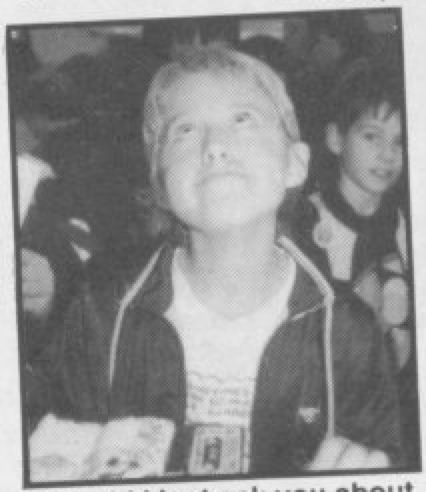
5 Hello I'm Mister Mad



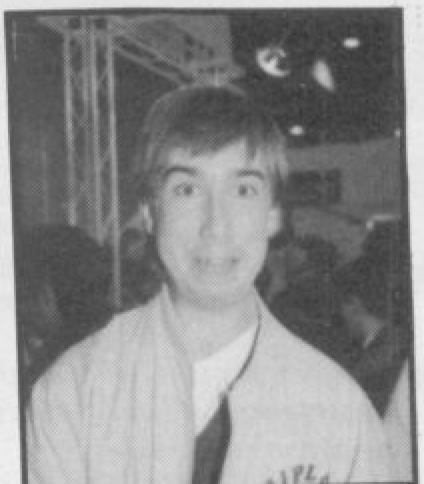
6 And what d'you think of Big Al Skeat (awww he's gone all shy)



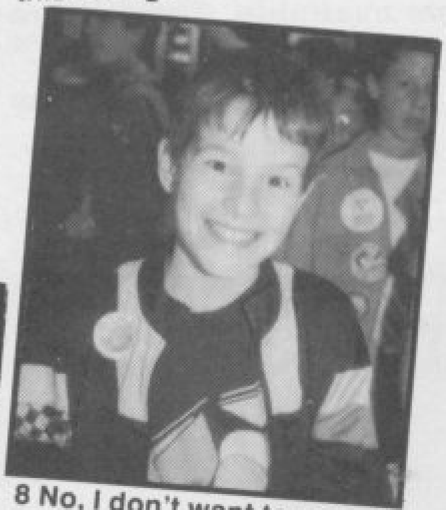
10 What d'ya mea I've won a night out with Tim?



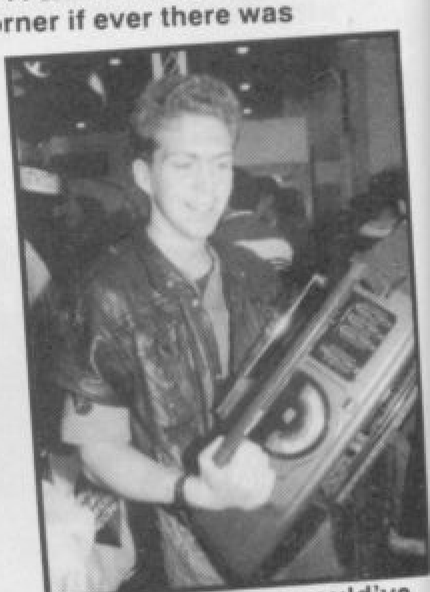
7 Could I just ask you about this listing?



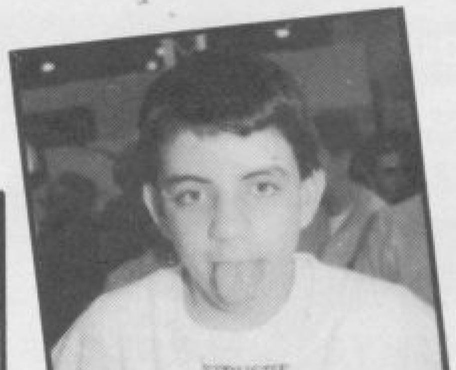
11 A candidate for Showoff's corner if ever there was



8 No, I don't want to snog the Princess Al



12 Jim says, you would've had a different colour triangl if I'd have been in charge

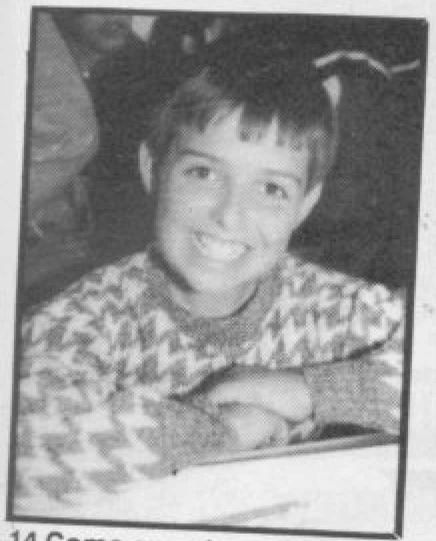


9 I'll ruddy well read it from this angle if it's the last thing I do



13 I'm really cute and I look like Philip Schofield

END OF THE LINE



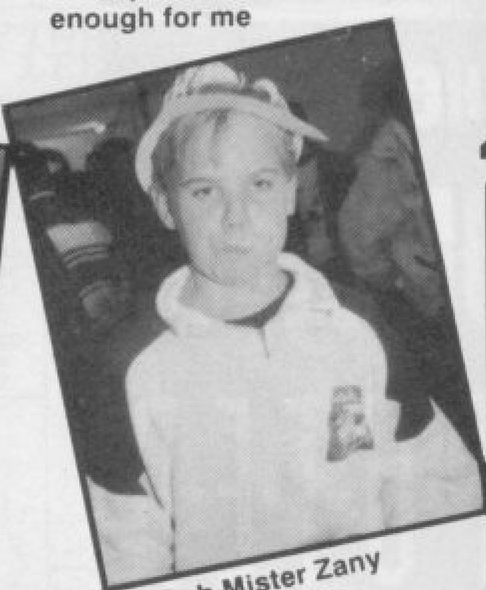
14 Come any closer and I'll punch you up the throat



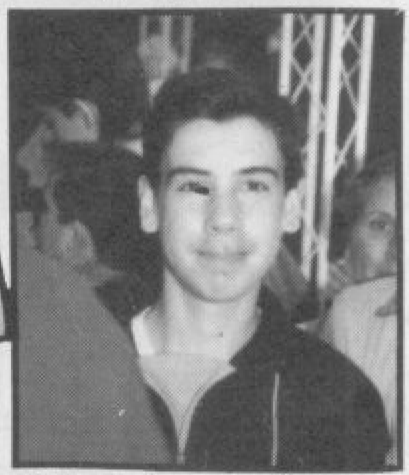
16 15 pints of Vimto is enough for me



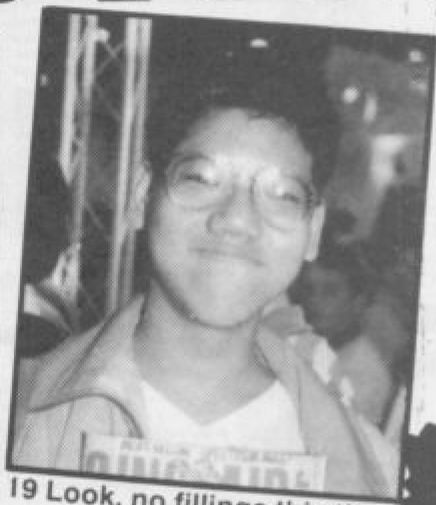
15 Jim Douglas hunky, don't make me laugh



17 Ooh Mister Zany



18 Mmm, bannana flavour



19 Look, no fillings this time



OH DEAR, IT'S CAPTION COMPO NO 35 AGAIN

Last issue, some of you may think that we made a bit of a bodge up with the pictures for Caption compo no 35. But, then you'd be very wrong, because we did it all on purpose (ho hum). We thought we'd like to keep you on your toes so those who didn't notice it you should clean out their ears and prop their eyes open with matchsticks from now on and sit up and pay attention for gawd's sake.

So this month we've given you the correct photograph with a sniparound edge, so all you have to do is cut it out and stick it to last month's coupon (but not really, because that would be really stupid wouldn't it - Al).

Let's see what you have to say about sexy Al and her pouty mate Sarah (SU's own marketing maniac) and we'll forget all about Bill Oddie I think, he was just a nasty nightmare. Captions in by December 30 1989.

Name..............................

....

Address ....

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Caption..

.... Send your entry to Caption Compo No 35 (Again), SU, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

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AD INDEX

Vrrrroooooomm!

Next month we've got a wheel squeeling motor madness special guaranteed to beat everything else off the lights! We've got full reviews (and we don't mean screenshot snippets) of theblockbuster driving games:

☆ Turbo Outrun
☆ Chase HQ
☆ Hard Driving

We've got playguides and sneaky tips on:

☆ Power Drift
☆ Stunt Car Racer
☆ Continental Circus

Plus Poke City revisitied with pokes for Batman, Spooked,

And there are two special Megatape events from Ocean:

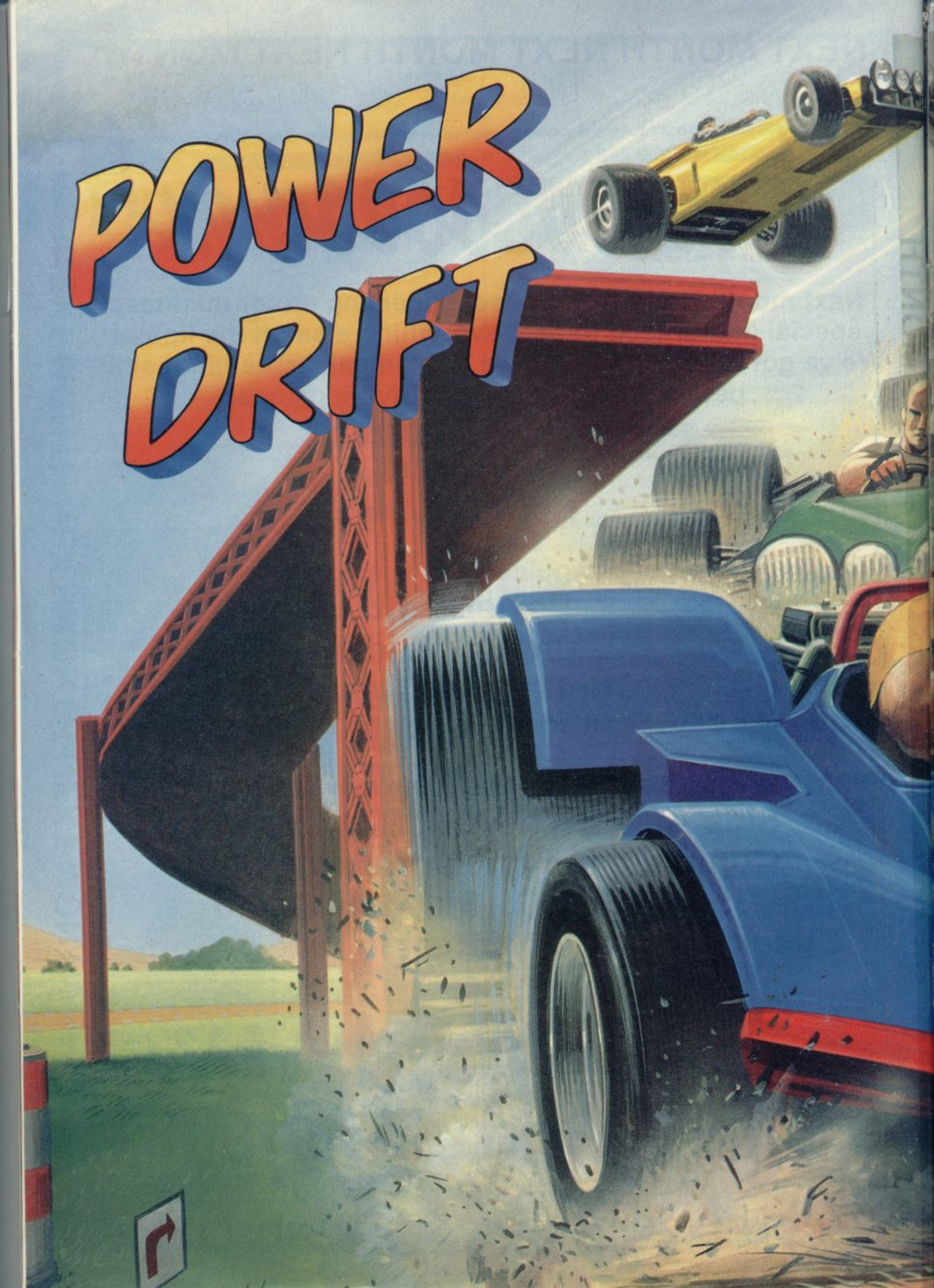
Side A: NIGHTMARE RALLY
Complete full price driving game
Side B: CHASE HQ - Playable Demo
Check out the very latest in race action.

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Off the Grid - Dec 18th

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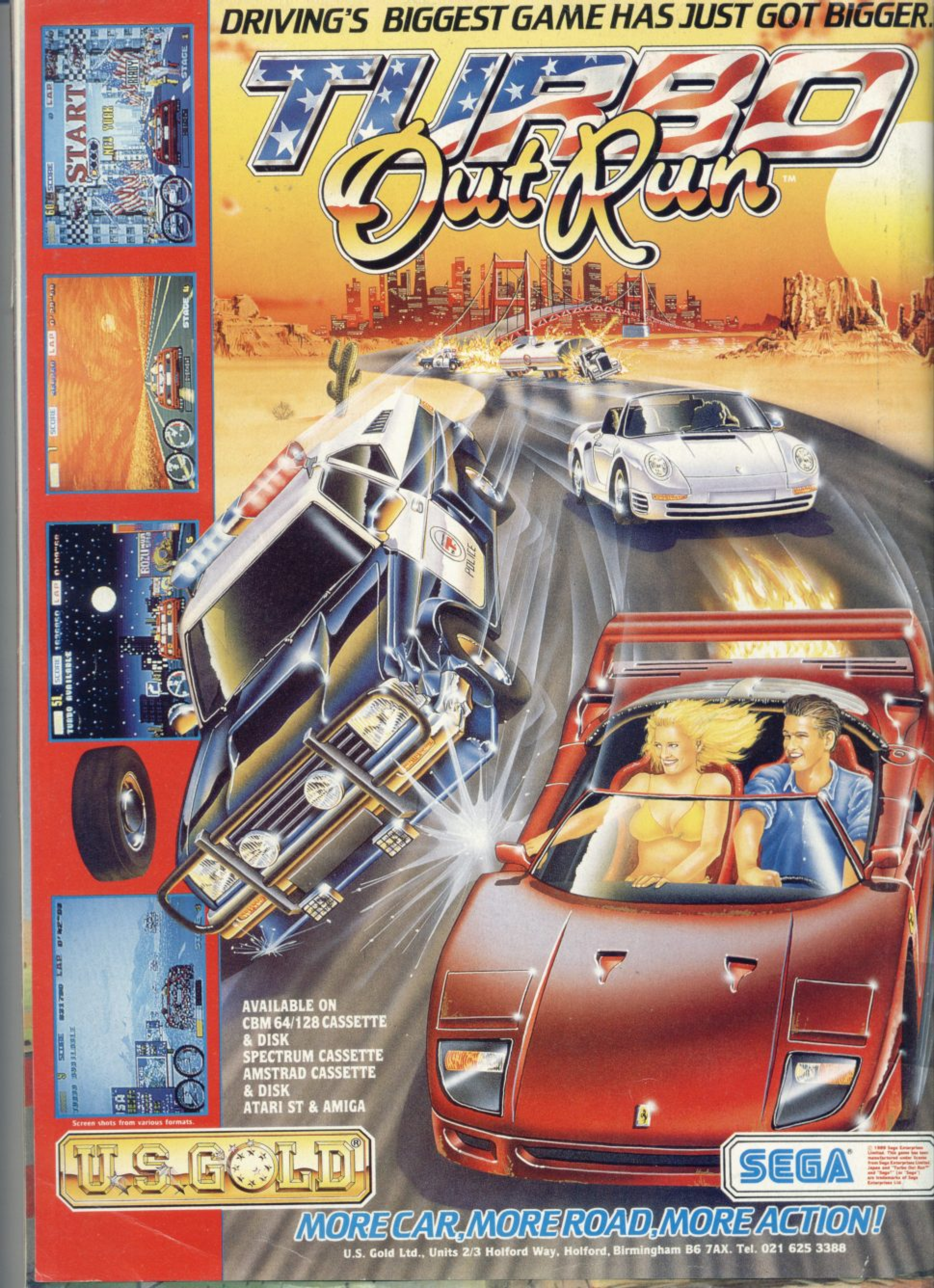
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POWER
DRIFT



START
AMIGA SCREEN SHOTS SHOWN
IN POLE POSITION...
It's fast... it's furious... it's POWER DRIFT!
Choose from twelve wacky drivers, like Jason the Skinhead or Jeronimo the Mohican and rev your way through 27 stomach churning circuits!
Watch the dust fly and the wheels spin as you screech over a 'roller coaster' track and wave goodbye to your opponents!
Roar over mounds of mud, drive through the desert, slip 'n' slide on snow-covered tarmac and race your way through the night to face the final lap!
CAREFUL! Power Drift is no easy ride!
If you're heading for a collision hold onto your seat and enjoy those 360 degree spins before you bump back down to earth!
Burn some rubber, put your foot to the floor and scream back to the winning post!!
ACTIVISION
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